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TAKE ONE

Volume 6 Number 2
January 1978

UPFRONT 4

News, gossip, and all that jazz, including letters from our readers.

FILM REVIEWS 7

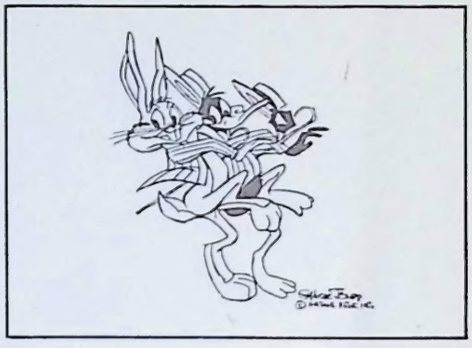
Reviews of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind,* by **John Simon** (p. 7); *Roseland,* by **Sreekumar Menon** (p. 9); *Short Eyes,* by **Judith Trojan** (p. 10); *The American Friend,* by **George Morris** (p. 11); *Strong-Man Ferdinand,* by **Jan Dawson** (p. 12); *Mr. Klein,* also by **George Morris** (p. 13); and several working films, by **James Monaco** (p. 14).

FRANCOIS TRUFFAUT: FEMINIST FILMMAKER? 16

Truffaut discusses the reaction, both male and female, to *The Man Who Loved Women,* and talks about future projects. In conversation with **Annette Insdorf.**

CRABQUACKS 18

Joe Adamson roams the world of exploding door slams and th- th- th- that's all, folks, to show us how the advent of sound changed animated films for the better.



DIRECTORS ON SOUND 23

Sixteen distinguished filmmakers discuss their use of sound and honor the achievements of others.

THE JAZZ SINGER 28

Archivist **Audrey Kupferberg** looks at the movie that changed it all, and **George Morris** and **Joe Medjuck** add two historical asides.

THE REGULARS 33

Columns from regulars **Amalie R. Rothschild** (p. 33), **Geoffrey Minish** (p. 34), **Waldo Lydecker** (p. 35), **Gene Youngblood** (p. 36), **Kay Armatage** (p. 38), **Joe Medjuck** (p. 40), **Bob Parent** (p. 40), and **George Morris** (p. 42).

BOOKS 43

Book News and Reviews plus our regular checklist of just-published film books by **George L. George.**

INFO 50

A complete list of sources for 16mm versions of films mentioned in this issue, plus conferences to attend, film festivals to enter, and our classifieds.

PUNDITS' PAGE 54

A handy-dandy guide to some of this season's major films in the form of nuggets gleaned from the writings of some of America's major movie critics, compiled by **Susan Schenker.**

Cover photo courtesy of Walt Disney Studios.

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UPFRONT
NEWS

The Master

At 77 years of age, Alfred Hitchcock is preparing his 56th feature, *The Short Night*, for Universal, and has just acquired Elmore Leonard's suspense novel, *Unknown Man No. 89* (about a Detroit process-server who saves a young woman from a con man). At the same time, Ernest (*North by Northwest*) Lehman is working on the script for *The Short Night*, which Hitch plans to shoot in Finland this summer.

Auto Eroticism

Wakefield Poole, director of such classics of gay porno cinema as *Boys in the Sand*, has now released a "fantasy documentary" (which includes one scene in which a young man has sex with his car). Hailed by Frank Schmitt (of the newspaper *Michael's Thing*) as "explosively and erotically stimulating," the film is called *Take One*.

Assistant Professor Wanted

The University of Utah is looking for an Assistant Professor to teach beginning and advanced courses in 8mm and 16mm film production, starting in September. If you think you're the one they're looking for, contact Professor William C. Siska, Chairman of Search Committee, Department of Theater, 205 Pioneer Memorial Theater, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112 — but hurry: the deadline's Jan. 30.

Holly Dressel

The Laurel-eye

Richard Dreyfuss, one time *Take One* contributor, will co-produce and star in *The Big Fix* (which will also "topline" Bonnie Bedelia and Susan Anspach), and is also being touted for a principal role in Bob Fosse's *All That Jazz*.

Meanwhile, he has bought the 1924 Moorish mansion that was once Stan Laurel's Hollywood home. Dreyfuss recently confessed himself "convinced that the ghost of Stan Laurel is still hanging around the house somewhere —looking for work."

Documenting the Raj

A unique documentary record of a now-vanished epoch is resting in the archives of The Centre of South Asian Studies at Cambridge, England: more than 200 home movies made, in the first half of this century, by "old hands" of the Indian Civil Service, the Indian Army, and other representatives of Britain's imperial interests in the subcontinent. Together, this footage presents a wealth of moving images that bring to life the volumes of written evidence from the period. Now Mary Thatcher, the archivist, is putting together a single documentary film from the material —certainly an important historical document—and needs a mere one thousand pounds Sterling to complete the task. If you think you might be interested in helping with the project, we invite you to contact her.

Shorts

George C. Scott is the worried parent of a daughter caught up in the underworld of pornography in **Hardcore,** to be directed (for Columbia) by Paul Schrader, from a script by Schrader (who wrote **Taxi Driver**) and John Milius (who wrote and directed **The Wind and the Lion**). ... Figures for the first six months of 1977 show that overall film attendance dropped by 5% in France. French films were hardest hit, with a decline of 16%. American films (which increased their share of the boxoffice to 36%) dropped by only 1% overall. ... January is the scheduled start-date for Ellen Burstyn and Alan Alda in **Same Time, Next Year,** and April for (it says here) Peter Sellers and Peter Sellers in **The Prisoner of Zenda**. ... Speaking of Sellers, how much of his and George Harrison's investment went down the drain, do you think, when the abrupt change of government in the Seychelles Islands (in the Indian Ocean) put a stop (at least temporarily) to their plans to build a luxury resort hotel there? ... With **Who Killed Bambi?** (starring England's lovely Sex Pistols) recently shelved midway through shooting, the race to complete the first punk-rock movie is again wide open. Apparently in the lead (in an admittedly small field) is Michael (**Myra Breckinridge**) Sarne, who has just optioned *The Punk*, a 62-page novella by 16-year-old Gideon Sams. ... Nelly (**La fiancée du pirate**) Kaplan is soon to start shooting on **Le satellite de Venus,** about the confrontation between a young man and a grandmother, her 35-year-old daughter, and 18-year-old grand-daughter. ... **Gore Vidal's Caligula** (which is still called that, despite Vidal's public attacks on the film) has finally been completed—at a cost roughly four times its original $3½-million budget. Producer Bob Guccione (of *Penthouse*) says that a three-hour final release print should be ready for the world by next fall. ... Guccione's next project is to be **City of Women,** which Federico Fellini will direct. ... Jerzy Skolimowski has completed his British-made feature (his second, after **Deep End**), **The Shout.** ... Dino De Laurentiis has acquired film and television rights to Flash Gordon. ... Nicholas Ray has apparently been signed to direct **The Sea Horse,** an independent feature that is scheduled to start shooting early this year. ... Billy Wilder has completed shooting on **Fedora,** with William Holden and Marthe Keller. ... Warner Bros. star Lina Wertmüller has announced that her next film will be **Teresa,** to be shot in Brazil from the novel by Jorge Amado. ... Such is the clout of young Steven Spielberg that he has convinced Universal Pictures to buy a script from two unknowns —Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale—and back Zemeckis (whose first feature this will be) as director with a $2,600,000 budget. Spielberg is to serve as Executive Producer on the film —and has promised that, if things start to go wrong, he will step in and direct the picture himself. Universal, it seems to us, wins either way(They get a new talent or else a cheap feature by an established talent.

LETTERS

One big cartoon

I was surprised to see my letter in your July / August issue. I erroneously listed "Fleets of Strength" as the cartoon in which Popeye got his new uniform. It was "The Mighty Navy". I've seen it several times so have no idea why I made the mistake, except that after a while they sort of all merge into one big cartoon.

I have also come under flack from some fans of the Famous Studios' Popeyes, but these are really just Fleischer films minus Fleischer. It had been his studio for so long that his pattern was set upon it permanently, but without him the studio was unable to go forward, just as without E.C. Segar the Popeye comic strip was doomed to a repetition of what had been laid down—and where it started out as an adult strip (much the same as Schulz's "Peanuts"), today it is a children's comic book.

By the way, *Creators of Life* is pretty bad on the history of animation when you get down to specific titles, but it does provide a source of information on Paul Terry, J.R. Bray, Winsor McCay, Emil Cohl, etc., and when he gets into the technique of animation it is really great.

Reg Hartt
Regus Films / Cinemarchives
Toronto, Ontario

Perceptive Portrait

A few additions and one correction to W.S. Di Piero's excellent review of Peckinpah's *Cross of Iron*. (July / August 77)

The action of the film takes place in the summer of 1943, not "two months" before the end of the war. In the opening credits ones sees the words "Taman Peninsula" and "The Retreat," as well as (I believe) the date. Given the first two pieces of information, the third follows automatically.

It is worth pointing out that *Cross of Iron* is one of the most scrupulously accurate and heavily literary films to have yet been made by an American director. Although ostensibly based on Heinrich's novel of the same name, there are textual references to situations in Hans Helmuth Kirst's "Gunner Asch" series, Guy Sajer's *The Forgotton Soldier*, and other, more popular works. It is ironic that Peckinpah's film, frequently dismissed as an exceptionally bloody war movie, is probably the most scholarly approach yet seen in a war film made in the West.

One should also point out the great extent to which many of the extant photographs of the Russian Front appear to have been used as visual sources. I believe that one of the things that gives the film its depth is the extent to which each scene recalls to us "real" scenes we have observed through stills or documentaries on the war.

Lastly, the portrait—collectively—of the German character is at least as perceptive as the ones being given us by films such as Schlondorff's *Coup de Grace*. *Cross of Iron* establishes Peckinpah as a filmmaker whose works deserve more than discussion or praise; they deserve serious study and reflection.

John Mosier
Associate Director
The Film Buffs Institute
Loyola University
New Orleans, LA

Star Wars: The Sugar Coated Poison Pill

All right. So it's lots of fun. I loved it—hokey to the nth degree, making fun of Flash Gordon, old-style science fiction and, of course, itself. "Don't take us seriously," said the *Star Wars*' masterminds. "Enjoy, enjoy."

So I did. But it seems to me that *Star Wars* carries several disguised warnings, time bombs about the climate of our times, satisfactions hidden beneath the very conventions that are being made fun of. They make me very uneasy.

Conventions are the very essence of the danger of the piece and, little doubt, of the sequels that are to come in high gear from the same mill. If you know about the 'convention' of the science fiction alien, monstrous insect-animal mixture or gorilla with a heart, then the send-up is hilarious. But if you don't know what a 'convention' is, then a lady in white who calls one "a shaggy carpet" (or words to that effect) is releasing all that you ever wanted to say about those who are unlike you, whom you didn't try to understand. And the exaggeration of the types of aliens in the bar in *Star Wars* is a laugh riot, like niggers in tuxedoes or bantus in business suits.

"But don't take us seriously," say the makers, who have taken themselves very seriously in promoting this vehicle so millions will see the mass destruction, militarism, black and white morality and racism in action. "It's all in fun." But *we do see these things*, gentlemen, and no matter how hokey the script, there are bodies in there, and beings being called carpets and medals being pinned on killers and chilling moral simplification.

If *Star Wars* is indicative of films to come, then I am frightened. The excuse of escapism cannot cover the psychological power of models of violence, particularly violence disguised in technology, where you don't touch those bloody corpses. And the excuse of the "send-up" should not wash with us either, for most people do not intellectualize a film like *Star Wars*, and many of us who do intellectualise it are covering an inner gratification we do not care to face. MIRV and B-1 bombers are the outcome of the attitudes of a film like *Star Wars*, and if the film is seen by the audiences expected to see it, it will add its grains of hate to the mountain of "public feeling" where demagogues later dig for support of violence and moral simplicity.

These implications of *Star Wars* are worth a moment of nasty thought, even as one recommends it for its easy pleasures.

Peter Brigg
Guelph, Ontario

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FILM REVIEWS

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND

Directed by Steven Spielberg

A Columbia Pictures release. Directed and written by Steven Spielberg. Producers: Julia Phillips and Michael Phillips. Music: John Williams. Director of Photography: Vilmos Zsigmond. Visual effects coordinator: Douglas Trumbull. Editor: Mike Kahn. Cast: Richard Dreyfuss, François Truffaut, Teri Garr, Melinda Dillon, Cary Guffey, Bob Balaban.

If there is such a thing as a zap-and-zowie school of filmmaking, Steven Spielberg is its prime example. At 30, Spielberg has to his cinematic credit the probable biggest moneymaker of all, *Jaws*; before that, *The Sugarland Express*, and, still earlier, television work, notably the TV film *Duel*, which had some theatrical distribution and gained him entry into the movies. Spielberg's latest, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, was brought in at seventeen million dollars, with another eight allegedly spent on advertising. Columbia Pictures has shown a lot of faith in this young man—to gamble what may amount to its survival on this movie.

From the very beginning, Spielberg's specialty was shock. Sex not at all, violence to some extent, and plain shock above all. In *Duel*, a motorist on a lonely Southwest American highway is very nearly hounded to death by a sinister truck whose driver never becomes visible. From a promising beginning, the film proceeds through a variety of excesses toward total incredibility. In *The Sugarland Express*, a young couple holding a policeman as hostage drive through Texas on a crime spree, with what looks like the entire Texas police force chasing after them. While grandly orchestrating cars and helicopters, Spielberg left the human elements of the story on a level that was both primitive and factitious. About *Jaws* one can say at least that however worthless the scenes on land were, those on or in the water were gripping.

Close Encounters is science fiction, a genre that shows signs of becoming a favorite form of cinematic escapism for reasons that are not far to hand. Nothing could be more up-to-date and with-it than the future; machines, gimmickry, and special effects obviate the need for such more complex human elements as characterization and dialogue, and make things easier for the new breed of illiterates both behind the cameras and in front of the screen; finally, SF effects are particularly dazzling to the drugged sense and yield excellent "head" pictures. However, they must contain expensive special effects to outdo television: where *2001* and *Star Wars* succeeded, *Fahrenheit 451*, *THX 1138*, and *The Man Who Fell to Earth* were failures.

A close encounter of the third kind, I learn from the program, is not just sighting an unidentified flying object (first kind) or physical evidence of it (second kind), but actual contact with creatures from it. (Amazing what one can learn from film programs these days, never mind the films themselves.) Spielberg's movie chiefly concerns Roy Neary, a power company lineman who sights a bevy of UFOs outside of Muncie, Indiana, and meets, while UFO-watching, Jillian Guiler and her little boy Barry. Roy becomes so obsessed with the vision of a cone-shaped object that haunts him night and day that he loses his job, his wife and children, indeed the sympathy of the world, while he builds a large cone-shaped replica up to the ceiling of his living room. Meanwhile UFO's have been parading through the cloud banks over the Wabash, causing peculiar electrical failures in some respects—e.g., city-wide blackouts; in other respects, though, there is electrical hyperactivity—e.g., various toys and appliances run amok. Nevertheless, only a handful of people seem to comprehend the cause of the queer goings-on.

The government is puzzled by the materialization in the middle of the Arizona desert of military airplanes that disappeared along with their crews in World War II. This and other curious phenomena (some of them tracked down in India—for no good reason, since they also manifest themselves in the U.S., but Spielberg evidently wanted a trip to the East) lead the government and the military on a merry chase. Along, too, is an inexplicable French scientist played by François Truffaut, whom Spielberg must have wanted around for some private fan-club reasons of his own. This fellow, unimaginatively named Lacombe (after Louis Malle's film), sometimes seems to run the entire U.S. army and government UFO operation; at other times, he does not seem privy to the fundamental strategy. Again, at times he seems lost without an interpreter, whereas at other times he speaks good English.

The action now shifts to the cone-shaped Devil's Tower, Wyoming (yes, the object of Roy's vision), where select army personnel

Waiting for the UFO. "When one creature comes closer, she looks like a cross between Lillian Gish and an embryo."

Melinda Dillon and Cary Guffey playing ordinary Midwestern mom and tot lost in zap-and-zowie land.

and scientists are to meet with the UFOs. The government, by means of a dubious trick, has evacuated the area, and manages to get rid even of the chosen pilgrims who have followed the UFOs as if they were the Star of Bethlehem. Among these pilgrims are Roy, and Jillian, whose little Barry the Otherworldlings have abducted in a piece of unexplained interplanetary kidnapping. Roy and Jillian elude the army and their helicopters as they make it to the summit of Devil's Tower, a prodigious feat of mountaineering as well as of stupidity, since the meeting with the UFOs is to take place at the base of the rock, as the special installation built there should make clear to any idiot. Nevertheless, in what seems like two or three leaps, Jillian and Roy make it down again to spy on the proceedings.

Now, I could go on telling you the plot or listing the absurdities—which, in this case, comes to be same thing—but why betray the few feeble surprises the movie holds? Let me stress merely that it is not so much a matter of a number of holes in the story, as of a story—and this may be a first—being built entirely out of holes. A friend and I counted, in a matter of minutes, some thirty or forty of them. For example, a car that, in one sequence, is demolished by rays from the UFOs, drives off, in the next, as good as new. Such things may make Spielberg the director with the shortest memory span—circa two minutes.

Under the many layers of contradiction, however, we come to the bedrock of solid nonsense. Thus, for instance, the visitors, despite their superior intelligence, are unable to crack the Earthlings' language, even though they are quite able to fathom the hand signals devised by Zoltán Kodály to teach deaf children the notes of music. The whole business of taking people from earth to the visitors' domain—either for thirty years, as in the case of the wartime aviators (who, by the way, return in a state of hebetude, not a day older or a jot wiser), or else for a few days, as in the case of Barry Guiler—is never made remotely clear; but, then, what is?

And the sheer contrivance of it all! A French interpreter who used to be a cartographer and happens to be there only because of Lacombe is the only person who can figure out that the UFO signals refer to the longitude and latitude of the proposed trysting place. Little Barry, an ordinary small-town tot, has more electrical toys than you could find in the toy department of the biggest metropolitan store. Jillian, his mother, has a splendid house without any visible means of support—she doesn't have to go to work at any time.

In Spielberg's lopsided world, people and their relationships do not begin to make sense. Nothing could be more arbitrary than the way Roy's wife packs up her children and leaves home instead of getting a psychiatric appointment for her husband; no love affair could be more casually begun and shoved aside than the one between Roy and Jillian. People, you see, have been turned into objects, while objects are accorded maximal importance. The movements of machines and gizmos of every kind are made volatile and manic: they zoom at us with exaggerated suddennesss and fury. Almost every scene is treated as if it were a climax: a car door cannot open or close without implications of Armageddon, what with fast cutting, tricky camera angles, and a soundtrack turned on high enough for the most belligerent discothèque. Only with extreme reluctance does the director-screenwriter accord us a few scenes of relative quietude; before we know it, all zap and zowie breaks loose again.

To evaluate performances in a movie like this is like trying to determine which of the soccer-playing dogs in the Soviet Circus is the best player.

This is not to say that Spielberg isn't capable of shooting certain climactic scenes with genuine ability; but after all those bogus climaxes, all that fake excitement, the real thing begins to look specious and, worse yet, anticlimactic. So it is when the visitors finally become visible—all female, it would seem, and looking from a distance like body-stockinged toadstools in a chorus line. When one creature comes closer, she (he? it?) looks like a cross between Lillian Gish and an embryo. As it did in *Jaws*, John Williams's score heaves heroically to convey momentousness, and sometimes actually succeeds at the price of redundancy—repeating what is already visually explicit for the benefit, one presumes, of blind children to whom neither the film's images nor the Kodaly hand signals would be of any use.

To evaluate performances in a movie like this is like trying to determine which of the soccer-playing dogs in the Soviet Circus is the best player. There is nothing much for actors to do here; only Richard Dreyfuss, as Roy, gets to scurry, rant, and sizzle quite a bit; but his character, too, remains underdeveloped. His very name is so infrequently mentioned that one tends to think of him only as "the Dreyfuss character"—or, perhaps, the Dreyfuss case. Still, Melinda Dillon and Teri Garr manage to look convincingly Midwestern; Truffaut, a director who has been photographed almost as much as his actors, looks only like himself, and so out of place.

A further token of the film's extravagance is that, though Vilmos Zsigmond gets "director of photography" credit, four other major cinematographers are also listed, along with seven special-effects or second-unit photographers. Some of this has to do with the long and sporadic shooting schedule of the film, but some of it, surely, is the kind of conspicuous waste that characterizes Spielberg's approach.

To clarify everything and make things cohere would have required, as Spielberg remarked in a press conference, a four-hour movie instead of the present one, slightly over half that length. Yet four hours of sense would go by faster and more pleasantly than two of nonsense. Moreover, I doubt whether anyone who could make a shorter period this nonsensical could have made much more sense at any length. Spielberg—which in German means toy mountain—may indeed have made the most monumental molehill in movie history, conveniently cone-shaped to serve as a dunce's cap for an extremely swelled head.

John Simon

John Simon is New York *magazine's theatre critic and former film reviewer.*

Does this man need a psychiatrist? Richard Dreyfuss plays Roy Neary, a UFO-obsessed lineman.

ROSELAND

Directed by James Ivory

A Cinema Shares International release of a Merchant-Ivory production. Director: James Ivory. Producer: Ismail Merchant. Executive Producers: Michael T. Murphy and Ottomar Rudolf. Screenplay: Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. Music: Michael Gibson. Editor: Humphrey Gibson. Cast: Teresa Wright, Lou Jacobi, Don De Natale, Geraldine Chaplin, Helen Gallagher, Joan Copeland, Christopher Walken, Conrad Janis, Lilia Skala, David Thomas, Louise Kirtland.

Christopher Walken and Geraldine Chaplin. "When she walks into the bright snow-bound street it is both a flight and a banishment."

In a sense James Ivory's films begin after the events have ended. An era has passed, affairs are over, husbands have died, all before the filmic time has begun, all outside the filmic space, an outside firmly excluded from the filmic space. This filmic space itself is a melancholy twilight area, the gray hills and gloomy palaces of *Shakespearewallah*, the darkened London flat of the *Autobiography of a Princess*, the red-lit dance hall of *Roseland*.

The bright-lit outside is the place where events have already taken place; it is the space the characters have fled, and even its brief inscription within the total space of the film is a violation of that dominant dimily-lit zone. "I wish I never had to go out again" is a wish that is present in the minds of all the characters in *Roseland*. It is also this darkened area that the "saner" characters escape from: Felicity Kendall in *Shakespearewallah*, James Mason in the *Autobiography*, and Geraldine Chaplin in *Roseland*, all firmly renounce this space despite strong pressures.

Within the filmic space however, there is one bright, well-lit area. The dance floor (*Roseland*), the portable movie screen lit up by the projector (*Autobiography*), the stage of the Shakespeare theatre (*Shakespearewallah*) are all instances of this. Picked out by the spotlight, it is the space of performance. Significantly, it is Roseland's resident dance instructress Cleo (Helen Gallagher), the initiator into that formal space, who provides the narration and the commentary for the first part of the film.

Roseland is built as a series of three episodes about three sets of characters who frequent Roseland, a dance hall on New York's West side. Considered vertically, they are also a series of repetitions organized around the three spaces identified at the beginning of this review. Suspended between the space of action (the Exterior) and the space of performance (the dance floor), the dominant filmic space of half-lights becomes the site, not of the story, but of story-telling; it is the place to which the characters converge after the event to relate what has already happened. (This is what gives Ivory's films, almost always written by the novelist Ruth Prawar Jhabvala, their somewhat literary character.) And these stories, events of that perpetually wintry and cold outside, are stories of loss—loss of husbands, wives, partners. The stories, when they are reciprocal, serve a cathartic function and exorcise the past. May (Teresa Wright), a still-good-looking widow who is increasingly taking to drink and losing herself in an idealized vision of her own youthful self that she sees in a mirror, is won over from the Imaginary (in Lacan's sense) to the side of life, when she sees in Stan's (Lou Jacoby) story an ideal reflection (but now, on this side of the mirror) of her own. This episode, the first in the film, is located between the Exterior and the Interior, and the passage from the former to the latter (this is always the direction of the movement; the reverse never takes place) is rendered unproblematic by the presence of the narrator, whose observations and comments from a position of bemused detachment act as a guarantor of continuity and closure.

In the second episode the narrator herself disappears—or rather, is drawn into the story. The loss here is of that privileged position of knowledge ("I never quite found out what happened to Georgina") which is a pointer to other losses: the failure of her students to win the hustle contest, and more importantly perhaps, the loss of her best dance partner, Russell (Christopher Walken). A dance teacher, she is ironically never on the dance floor, and on the only occasion she takes to the floor she is abandoned in the middle of a number and has to be rescued by Roseland's perpetually cheerful and competent master of ceremonies (Don de Natale). Russell, a narcissistic boy with oedipal fixations, is kept by a wealthy older woman, Pauline (touchingly played by Joan Copeland). Talented enough to be the best dancer on the floor, attentive and considerate enough to make a protective boyfriend for Marilyn (Geraldine Chaplin), Russell could move freely among the three spaces, but as Marilyn all too quickly realizes, this is not to be. Between Cleo, who logically belongs to the Interior space and Marilyn, who belongs to the Exterior, no mediation is possible. To live with her and train with Cleo is Marilyn's ambitious programme for Russell, but the Outside is an excluded place and will not be accommodated. To Marilyn's "we are on the same side Cleo," the reply is "Oh boy, do you have it coming to you." Marilyn's presence is anomalous in that dance hall where she is herself uncomfortable. What she introduces into its homogeneity is not only a class distinction, but every kind of difference. "She reminds me of my mother," Russell confesses, "my mother would have liked to talk like that, wear that kind of clothes." She is the mark of that difference that has escaped them; she is also the one who must make distinctions: "You have to make it clear to Cleo and Pauline," she insists, but Russell: "I have known them all my life. There is no need to make anything clear." It is inevitable that she leave, and in the last scene of the episode when she walks into the bright snow-bound street it is both a flight and a banishment.

If Marilyn is implacably of the Outside, Rosa (Lilia Skala) is the inveterate Insider. Her story is neither told (diegesis) nor shown (mimesis), but dreamt, which is to say that the story is constituted outside language. But this reverie is not so much a

nostalgic recovery of the past as an active engagement in a project—the 'champagne hour' and the peabody contest in which she and her inept partner Arthur (David Thomas) take part indefatigably without ever winning. The dance floor is her province: "I hate to sit out," she grouses. She will dance as long as she has a partner; her wish is to lose herself in dance, to swoon into oblivion at the end of a victorious contest. Not surprisingly this least competent dancer of all the main characters is the one most often seen on the dance floor. The Interior space, marginal in the first two episodes, now becomes the site of the story. Cut off from all exterior, this space is given over entirely to the imaginary. Presided over by the master of ceremonies, who combines in himself the aspects of virility and an idealized asexual beauty, this now is also a desexualised space. (We may thus draw the full implications of the term 'Imaginary,' which I am using in the Lacanian sense.) Bereft of partners and dreading the outside into which she reluctantly prepares to go, Rosa is led back to the floor by the solicitous M.C. He offers to be her partner and leads her through the dance as she ceremonially sinks in a whirl of satin. The 'Imaginary' space is also the site of mortality.

Some such disturbing conclusion always seems to hide at the heart of most of Ivory's films. For all their lightness and good humour they are cheerless films. The garrulousness of the princess (Madhur Jaffrey) and the measured exactitude of Cyril Sahib (James Mason) in the *Autobiography* only thinly mask a desperation with a reality which eludes them. Fantasy lurks just outside the world of his films. But in *Roseland* the fantastic is inscribed boldly within the film, and the characters' loss to the world of fantasy is complete and irremediable.

Sreekumar Menon

Sreekumar Menon has written for The Village Voice *and* Take One, *among other publications.*

SHORT EYES

Directed by Robert M. Young

A Film League Inc. release. Directed by Robert M. Young. Produced by Lewis Harris. Screenplay by Miguel Pinero. Music Scored and Composed by Curtis Mayfield. Film Editor: Edward Beyer. Director of Photography: Peter Sova. Sound: Bill Daly. Cast: Bruce Davison, José Perez, Nathan George, Don Blakely, Shawn Elliott, Tito Goya, Joseph Carberry, Kenny Steward, Miguel Pinero.

Bruce Davison gives the performance of his career in *Short Eyes*. In fact, under Robert M. Young's direction, *Short Eyes* is a powerhouse of ensemble acting. Young is a white, Harvard grad whose career has predominantly centered on television documentaries, such as the NBC "White Paper" specials *"Sit-In"* and *"Angola: Journey to a War"* or CBS-TV's *"Eskimo: Fight for Life."* He has had limited but notable experience with actors (*Nothing But a Man* and TV dramas *JT* and *Alambrista*). Yet, although this film was shot entirely within the walls of "The Tombs," New York City's Men's House of Detention, the grimy reality of prison life comes through the high voltage performances and not from the grubbiness of the set, which looks as deliberately beautiful as any stage set.

The screenplay, adapted from the award-winning play by ex-Sing Sing inmate Miguel Pinero, chronicles a day in the tenuous life of inmates awaiting their fates in a detention center, e.g., further sentencing, bail, trial, etc. The racial superstructure is of prime importance here. The jockeying for power of Puerto Rican, black, and white inmates takes up a lot of the waiting time in this limbo land.

Sexual frustration is also a constant. A woman's breast is etched around a toilet flush button. The walls are full of nude pinups, and seduction of young inmates and raunchy monologues are the norm. Love and humour exist side by side with hate and powerlessness.

Juan, also known as the Poet, is the resident caregiver; the only inmate not totally wrapped up in his own hype and head. As played by José Perez, Juan is at once tender and hard, forgiving, yet always aware of his "territorial" limits.

Clark Davis makes good use of Juan's goodwill. A child molester, hence the nickname "short eyes," Davis becomes a marked man as soon as his alleged crime is revealed. Bruce Davison's Clark Davis is a scared, bilious-faced coward, with bulging eyes glazed from too many shock treatments and sleepless nights in a mental ward. His dazed, detailed confession to Juan of his entry into a life of molesting little girls is brilliantly read, as hideous a story as it is mesmerizing and titillating. But this is as it should be; Davison manages to suggest Clark Davis's ambivalence to the crime in this way, and both the perversion and sensuality of his sickness.

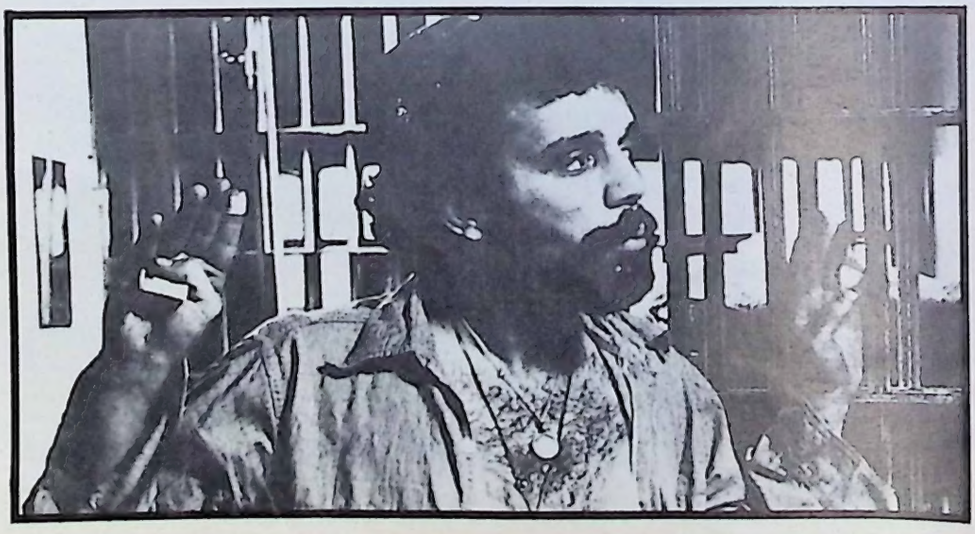
The culminating violence is all the more shocking for what we don't see and for the pity that we come to feel for the trapped animal played so well by Davison and for the fondness that we come to feel for his victimizers. The sound of Clark Davis choking on the blood from his own slit throat is less gruesome than the tension leading up to this inevitable murder.

The hopelessness, the unbending, compulsive social positioning of the incarcerated all comes through the screenplay—words spoken and those left unsaid—and through the electrifying performances. The ugliness is inherent in the script, in the life that its author knows so well. The look of this film is tame; its sound and meaning are horrible.

Judith Trojan

Judith Trojan is Managing Editor of Sightlines *magazine and Evaluations Editor at the Educational Film Library Association in New York City. She is the co-editor and one of the writers of a new book entitled* 16mm Distribution.

Writer / actor Miguel Pinero. "The ugliness is inherent in the script, in the life that its author knows so well."



THE AMERICAN FRIEND

Directed by Wim Wenders

A New Yorker Films Release. Directed and written by Wim Wenders. Based on a novel by Patricia Highsmith. Camera: Robby Müller. Editor: Peter Przygodda. Music: Jürgen Knieper. Cast: Bruno Ganz, Dennis Hopper, Lisa Kreuzer, Gérard Blain, Nicholas Ray, Samuel Fuller, Daniel Schmid, Sandy Whitelaw, Jean Eustache, Lou Castel, Andreas Dedecke.

In *The American Friend* Wim Wenders has taken a classically structured mystery by Patricia Highsmith and turned it into a modernist tragicomedy of urban alienation. Highsmith rests her intricately-woven story on plot and character, while Wenders has created a film of tone and mood. Culled from two novels by Highsmith (*Ripley's Game* and *Ripley Underground*), Wenders' adaptation retains the homoerotic bond between protagonist and antagonist that characterizes the author's *Strangers on a Train*.

Tom Ripley (Dennis Hopper), a jet-setter crook who deals in art forgeries and other illicit activities, is asked by an underworld pal (Gérard Blain) to recommend an "unknown" assassin to rub out two Mafiosi, the catch being that the hit man's anonymity will both insure the success of the enterprise and reduce the chances of being caught. Remembering a casual insult at an art auction, Ripley suggests Jonathan Zimmermann (Bruno Ganz), a Swiss framemaker who is dying of leukemia. Playing upon Jonathan's fears that he will leave his wife and child without sufficient funds when he dies, Blain offers him 250,000 marks to do the first job on the Paris Metro, and the second, on the train from Munich to Paris. Ripley, acknowledging his growing affinity for this amateur killer, assists Jonathan in the second murder, simultaneously sealing their friendship and provoking a bloody massacre.

It's a terrific story, as Highsmith tells it; but Wenders has merely recreated its peaks, choosing to omit the crevices in the narrative—those interstices which define relationships, elucidate character, and provide psychological links. *The American Friend* is often brilliant, but it is essentially a film of dazzling set pieces, isolated, unconnected, and therefore lacking cumulative effect. Wenders wants to have it both ways. He wants to make a taut, old-fashioned thriller, but his directional sensibility is a contradiction of the narrative impulse. Unlike Fassbinder, whose adaptation of Theodor Fontane's 1894 novel *Effi Briest* works on multiple levels, Wenders is unable to reconcile two antithetical modes of filmmaking. Wenders' most successful films, *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick* (1971) and *Kings of the Road* (1976), offer more sympathetic frameworks for his investigations into the loss of identity. The disaffection is built into the material in those films; thus, Wenders' oblique approach, which combines a free-association recounting of events with a frequent use of ellipsis, seems more appropriate.

This is not to indicate that *The American Friend* is a failure. By any standards it is one of the more *immediate* movie experiences this year. Although it is a movie of set pieces, Wenders has realized these concentrated sequences with clarity and power. Both of the murders are tremendously exciting: the first a cat-and-mouse game played out among subway platforms, escalators and various icons of modern angst (Muzak, TV monitors and commercial billboards); the second, a grotesque comedy of errors set aboard an express train hurtling through the countryside, the verdant fields glimpsed outside providing a sharp contrast to the grisly violence being enacted in the men's john.

The intensity of these sequences is heightened by Robby Müller's superb cinematography. In fact *The American Friend* is perhaps the most stunningly photographed film of the year. Müller, who has worked with Wenders on all of his films, has used a new Kodachrome film that distills the red-and-blue neonlit world of the movie into an iridescent nightmare. The colors, all sharp primaries, are vibrant and hallucinatory. Müller and Wenders have cast a dreamlike glow over the film, the blue and green hues of the harbor lights outside Jonathan's house in Hamburg exploding into the opalescent light emanating from the Coca-Cola machine, juke box, and Canada Dry sign in Tom Ripley's gameroom.

Subtle associations are achieved through color. The yellow cab that brings Ripley to New York's Soho in the opening shot of the film is linked to Jonathan by his son's bright yellow raincoat, and by the yellow Volkswagen that mysteriously disappears from the front of Jonathan's shop just before he receives the cablegram that sets the plot in motion. Similarly, the red light bulb that vibrates in "dead" painter Nicholas Ray's Soho loft is a recurring motif throughout the film: Tom's red satin sheets, Jonathan's red Volkswagen, and the red inner lining of the valise Jonathan packs for his first "job" in Paris, form a complex pattern of subliminal connective tissue.

Besides color, other subliminal associations abound. When a man stumbles and falls at the top of an escalator in an airport terminal, the moment registers. Later, when Jonathan shoots his Mafia target on an ascending escalator, his victim's body slumps at the top, the stairs continuing to move under the corpse rendering the death at once more horrible and final. Indeed, the preponderance of subliminal references is one of the movie's chief problems. There are so many allusions within the film to other films rooted in the crime genre that *The American Friend* uncomfortably resembles one vast homage, rather than a self-contained piece of work. Wenders, like so many young directors unable to synchronize formal structure with appropriate content, asks his audience to let its collective imagination ride over the rough spots, the unexplained chinks in the narrative. In any film, the suspension of disbelief for such leaps of faith is precarious; in a mystery film, it is fatal.

The feeling that *The American Friend* is more about movies than anything else is reinforced by the praxinoscopes, gyroscopes, cameras and cassettes with which Wenders identifies Jonathan and Ripley. The supporting cast includes Nicholas Ray and Samuel Fuller, two names inevitably associated with the crime film, as well as such European directors as Gérard Blain (himself an actor under Chabrol and Hawks), Daniel Schmid, Peter Lilienthal and Jean Eustache. Such casting only strengthens the film's self-consciousness, encouraging it to keep turning in on itself rather than expanding and developing.

Nowhere is this film's schizophrenic nature more evident than in the casting of Bruno Ganz as Jonathan and Dennis Hopper as Ripley. Ganz is marvelous, creating an ordinary man resigned to an early death whom murder liberates, releasing the extraordinary individuality dormant beneath his conformist image. Hopper presents more of a problem. In interviews Wenders prides himself on having cut every "man" with which Hopper prefixed a line of dialogue, but he has still allowed the actor to give the same spaced-out performance Hopper has been giving since *Rebel Without a Cause*. The smirk that's never too far from Hopper's face undercuts the relationship he is supposed to share with Ganz; he cannot resist indicating at every opportunity that he is certainly not taking any of this too seriously. Hopper's attitude is symptomatic of the entire film. Wim Wenders has certified his position as one of the trinity of important New German directors (along with Fassbinder and Herzog), but *The American Friend*, as brilliant as much of it is, is a cold, inarticulate work. Like the quality of blue in the canvases Ray forges, it's not genuine.

George Morris

George Morris is the author of John Garfield, *just published by Pyramid. His book on the Hollywood melodrama of the 1950s will be published in the fall of 1978.*

STRONG-MAN FERDINAND

Directed by Alexander Kluge

Director: Alexander Kluge. Producer: Gerhard Czepe. Camera: Thomas Mauch. Assistant Cameraman: Martin Schäse. Editor: Heidi Genée. Sound: Heiko Hinderks. Assistant Director: Traudi Kurz. Cast: Heinz Schubert, Verena Rudolph, Joachim Hackethal, Günther Hoffmann.

Contradictions inform the whole of Kluge's work, providing him at once with a method and a fertile field of observation. "An armada of first-class individuals in an age of collective struggles" is the phrase he himself uses to introduce the portraits that make up his fragmented fiction, *Learning Process with Lethal Conclusion*. Its separate characters—a gigolo, a schoolteacher, factory worker, prostitute—respond to the feeling that their lives are meaningless and futile by an excess of professional zeal, trying to preserve the values of the artisan in an era of impersonal mass production. Their idealism, or, more particularly, its extremism, makes them dangerous. Both to the State and to themselves. One such zealot is the factory security officer in the story *A Bolshevik for Capitalism*, now fleshed out into the title character of the film *Strong-Man Ferdinand*.

In Ferdinand, the conflicting legacies of bourgeois ideology and liberal institutions find a logical and (were it not logical) a worthy battleground. The true child of a militaristic culture and a nation still divided by occupying forces, he is a daily combatant in a Cold War in which he passionately believes: on the one side, law-and-order, an ideology that transcends even the institutions which enshrine it; on the other, outside agitators, inside agitators, Communists, Arabs, spies, trade unionists. As he observes, while different-coloured miniature fish swim in a domestic aquarium through a scale model of the factory, "There *is* no overall picture." Which heightened sense of menace serves merely to increase his vigilance. He studies the writings of the enemy (purchased in a left-wing bookstore where he refuses to engage in conversation); in the police force, he urges a policy of arresting criminals *before* they've committed their crimes; as a security officer, he drills his men in theory and in practice, staging commando-style raids on a competitor's plant, and even arresting the company vice-president for treason when he finds him planning an international merger. His life has no precise meaning, and he tries—through his work—to worry one out of it, like a dog extracting the marrow from a hollow bone. Denied an opportunity of doing what he's capable of, he takes up a sniper's rifle to make a protest, planning a near-miss for a passing Minister; he misses, and his hit proves his point. "When your life has no precise meaning, you can't always be perfectly accurate in your aim."

Ferdinand believes in states of emergency with the same conviction as the model citizen believes in normal situations. Acting as bodyguard to his boss on a visit to the opera, he presumes the percussion to be gunfire and whips out a revolver; to train properly for the Christmas festivities, he takes his girlfriend on a practice vacation that most resembles a forced march. He tries, in an inconsequent universe, to leave nothing to chance.

One perceptive critic observed that Kluge had stood Godard's formula on its head by confronting clear ideas with vague images

When Kluge first screened *Artistes at the Top of the Big Top: Disorientated* in 1968, one perceptive critic observed that he had stood Godard's formula on its head by confronting clear ideas with vague images. The reverse is true of *Strong-Man Ferdinand*, where the contradictory ideas of social democracy are confronted by crystal-clear images of the hero's single-minded acts. At the same time, the film owes less to Godard than to Mack Sennett and the Keystone Cops. The scenes of group activity—police cars surrounding the scene of a burglary, or the security guards marching in double time through a wintry landscape—have a pratfalling, pantomime quality that is also subtly infused with a lyricism that reaches its crescendo in a cutaway shot of a full moon brightly shining over the scurrying clouds of smoke from the factory chimneys.

This lyricism is not entirely the result of the colour photography or the fact that the cameraman is Thomas Mauch (who photographed Herzog's *Aguirre*). Ferdinand himself is played by a diminutive television comedian, Heinz Schubert, and each shot of this misplaced individual kicking passionately against the indifferent mediocrity of the State shows him, stature-wise, at a disadvantage. Ferdinand is dwarfed by the ramp at police headquarters, up which we see him climbing in silhouette. Beside his colleague Kniebeling, the head of a neo-Nazi bouncers' squad, he stands like some fragile Laurel to a bouncing Oliver Hardy. Even his thieving girlfriend (one of the many thorns in his side) towers over him. And when the pair of them drive forth with their trailer to the Christmas training ground, their little motorcade is suddenly diminished by the passing of a workman's hut pulled by a tractor. Ferdinand is allowed his blustering dignity, but that dignity is shown to be perennially misplaced.

Besides the moral contradictions glibly assumed by Western democracies—manufacturers growing rich on products whose uses they'd rather ignore, bosses who order you to provide them with perfect security without infringing on any citizen's rights—technology and hardware have a wonderfully appealing simplicity. Ferdinand's finest hour most probably lies in the inventorying of the precision tools of his trade: the electronic stethoscope, wire-tap detector and surveillance cameras which he is, of course, never allowed to use to their full capacity. Of them, as of himself, the short-sighted bosses will demand a cautious moderation.

Strong-Man Ferdinand is the first of Kluge's feature films to involve a male, rather than female protagonist, and also the first to observe a practical proletarian rather than a bourgeois intellectual. Despite this, and despite the successful surface farce, there is no mistaking the kinship between Ferdinand and Kluge's earlier lady Utopians, all striving to discover individual solutions to the collective forces that shape and engulf their lives.

These same collective forces can also determine the life of a film. Despite *Ferdinand*'s obvious popular appeal, in Germany, where his years of lobbying for the Film Subsidy Legislation have made him few friends in the trade, Kluge has had a bleak time trying to find exhibition outlets for it. Those of us who find his films dynamic, intelligent, humorous and uncompromising, can only hope that he still agrees with his heroine Leni Peickert: "The longer we wait for Utopia, the better it gets."

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by Jan Dawson

Jan Dawson is a freelance critic, broadcaster, translator and programme consultant.

MR KLEIN

Directed by Joseph Losey

A Quartet Films release of a Basil Film Presentation. Director: Joseph Losey. Producer: Raymond Danon. Executive Producer: Ralph Baum. Screenplay: Franco Solinas. Artistic Director: Alexander Trauner. Director of Photography: Gerry Fisher. Music: Egisto Macchi and Pierre Porte. Cast: Alain Delon, Jeanne Moreau, Michel Lonsdale, Juliet Berto, Suzanne Flon, Francine Berge, Jean Bouise, Massimo Girotti.

Alain Delon as Mr. Klein

Mr. Klein is Joseph Losey's best film in years. Robert Klein (Alain Delon) is one of Losey's upper-middle-class aesthetes, a dealer in antiques and *objets d'art* who has discovered a new means of supplementing his income in the France of 1942. He pays ridiculously low francs for the priceless paintings and heirlooms that Jews are willing to sell in order to flee the Nazis.

When a Jewish newspaper is rerouted to his doorstep, Klein realizes to his horror that there is another, Jewish, Robert Klein living in Paris. Since his father assures him that their branch of the Kleins has been French and Catholic since Louis XIV, Klein is understandably anxious to avoid any confusion among the authorities. Thus begins his quest for the elusive other Robert Klein, a search that Losey turns into a metaphysical exploration of self.

As Klein checks with the offices of *Information Juives,* visits the Prefecture of Police, and discovers the Pigalle address of this other Mr. Klein, his curiosity gives way to anxiety, his desperation mounting as the pursuit leads him simultaneously in diverse directions and deeper into himself. Gradually, Losey reveals that Delon's efforts to prove Mr. Klein's corporeality have become an objective pretext for a subjective attempt to unlock that part of his identity he has never acknowledged.

Losey's films often portray two male characters whose fates are interlocked in a deadly power struggle. Power—the power of class, money and sex, the power that by definition corrupts—is one of his central concerns, manifested in the predator-prey relationships that inform such films as *The Servant* (1964) and *The Assassination of Trotsky* (1972). *Mr. Klein* attains an added dimension by locating this struggle within one character. The other Mr. Klein is never really seen, apart from a few, almost subliminal glimpses—a snapshot, a figure on a sidecar in the late evening mist, or his back among the crowd at the film's end, when his fate and Delon's are irrevocably linked in a freight car carrying them both to certain death.

Delon's probe uncovers disquieting parallels between his "other" and himself. Besides their physical similarities, both men are having affairs with married women of wealth and position while simultaneously carrying on with a whore. Both share a fondness for *Moby Dick* as well as the same kind of razor. More important, both men approach other human beings with an entomological eye, viewing mankind as an "infinite variety of specialized instincts." The credits of the film occur over a slow fade into a tapestry revealing a vulture pierced with an arrow, the ancient cabalistic symbols at its four corners intimating greed, arrogance, indifference. At an art auction this tapestry is "explained" as a representation of greed punctured by remorse, an oversimplification that nevertheless indicates the trajectory of Delon's self-investigation. Later, the Jewish Klein's mistress (Jeanne Moreau) likens Delon to a vulture, holding a lit match to his face in a way that uncomfortably evokes the film's opening sequence—a doctor's methodical examination of a naked, middle-aged woman to discover any traces of Semitism. In contrast, Moreau compares her lover to a snake who is hibernating until a better season, a metaphor visualized in another tapestry that hangs in her luxurious mansion at Ivry-la-Bataille.

The formal structure of the film is a coextension of Delon's inquiry into the inner recesses of his nature. At three crucial points in the narrative a handheld camera assumes Delon's viewpoint. When the love-sick concierge (Suzanne Flon) lets Delon into the other Klein's Pigalle flat, the camera subjectively darts about, nervously surveying the remnants of a life disrupted *in medias res*—a showgirl's white boot, a discarded stocking, and a floor covered with rat droppings. The second instance accompanies Delon's arrival at Moreau and her aristocrat husband's country estate. The butler ushers Delon through the front entrance, down the corridors where faded patches of wallpaper suggest paintings sold for survival, and into the salon where a chamber concert is in progress. It is here in this house, in his confrontation with the other Klein's mistress Moreau, that Delon determines to follow his quest to its logical conclusion. And that conclusion manifests itself in the third and final subjective thrust into the unknown, the handheld camera that plunges Delon and his other self into the darkness of the underground terminals herding the Jews to Germany.

In *Mr. Klein* Losey persuasively argues that self-knowledge is essential before one can establish sympathetic relationships with other people. The introverted, deceptively self-contained Delon attains an awareness of the plight besetting the Jews through his personal nightmare. Against instinct and the advice of his well-heeled friends, he relentlessly dogs his prey until the search assumes the proportions of an existential journey, disclosing a potential in himself that might have gone unrealized had a newspaper not been left at his door. Over and over throughout the film, Delon repeats "It has nothing to do with me," when of course even he realizes by the film's end that it has everything to do with him. Losey, a director who knows a thing or two about persecution and moral accountability, has seldom dealt with such sympathetic material, and he infuses every shot in this film with the passion and commitment that can only come from personal experience.

Losey's films are always beautifully constructed, but the *mise-en-scène* in *Mr. Klein* is truly exemplary. The imagery has that Losey look—sensuous, tactile, and vaguely decadent. The deterministic camera angles that trap his characters amidst their objects, mirrors and rococo architecture, portray a world in which texture is all and essence is as elusive as the shadowy Mr. Klein. The casting of Alain Delon in the title role is inspired. In a way Delon resembles a shadow of his former self; his looks are beginning to go, and his slightly ravaged countenance with its inevitable associations from past roles is a poignant reminder of mortality. Apart from such iconographical considerations, Delon is superb. As he has grown older, the actor's performances in such films as Melville's *Le Samourai* and Losey's *The Assassination of Trotsky* have contained a depth missing from his earlier work. It is impossible to imagine this film without him, and through his incarnation of greed transmuted into remorse, Joseph Losey's *Mr. Klein* becomes one of the most harrowing cinematic experiences of the 70s.

George Morris

WORKING FILMS

Coup pour coup

Produced by Marin Karmitz with Cinema Services, Paris, and W.D.R., Cologne. Director: Marin Karmitz. Filmmakers: Jean-Pierre Baronski, Paul Bertault, Patrick Cabouat, Jean-Noël Delamarre, André Dubreuil, Evelyne July, Jacques Kebadian, Christine Lipinska, Frédérique Mathieu, Marie-Christianne Meynard.

Humain, trop humain

Produced by Louis Malle and NEF. Director: Louis Malle. Photography: Etienne Becker. Sound: Jean-Claude Laureux. Editing: Suzanne Baron, Reine Wekstein, Jocelyne Rivière.

François Truffaut once said that the thing that fascinated him about American films in general (and Raoul Walsh's work in particular) was their extraordinary ability to communicate a sense of what real work was like — from fixing a flat tire to serving time on an assembly line, from scratching a living out of the earth, to being a lineman for a power company. There's truth in that remark, of course, but it has to be read in context. It's not so much that American filmmakers have shown such a great devotion to portraying working-class existence on the screen as that the French have successfully avoided doing so with rare unity. Until May '68, that is.

Probably the most significant effect of the "events of May and June" on French film art was the discovery of work as a subject and the formation of cooperative and communal systems of production to deal with the topic and its political ramifications. The most active group in this area has certainly been Chris Marker's SLON (Société de Lancement des Oeuvres Nouvelles — SLON is also the Russian word for elephant). Formed in 1967 as the production organization for *Far From Vietnam*, SLON is also responsible for the seminal *A bientôt, j'espère* on the strikes at the Rhodiacéta factory near Lyons which preceded May '68. This was followed by *Classe de lutte, Order Reigns in Simcaville,* and *Weekend à Sochaux* among others. This last represented a breakthrough for SLON since it was actually made not by the filmmakers of the group but by the workers of the Peugeot plant at Sochaux whom it was about, with Marker and associates serving as technical advisors.

Marin Karmitz, who had made one feature film (*Sept jours ailleurs*) prior to 1968, first gained some attention with *Camarades* (1970) which was shown at Cannes and the New York Film Festival. Dealing with the rising consciousness of a young worker, *Camarades* was designed for commercial distribution and made in the traditional way. (It had "stars" — Juliet Berto and Dominique Labourier.) With *Coup pour coup* (made in 1971 and released in early 1972), Karmitz took the second step along the path towards militant film. This fiction about a strike in a garment factory near Rouen was made collectively by 98 people — workers, students, professional filmmakers, actors, and unemployed of all categories. Karmitz and the filmmakers presented the workers with a draft script ("the language was unreal," one of the women workers says, "it was a man's language. We changed all that and just kept a few of the themes.") Everyone who worked on the film was paid the same salary (about $300 per month) and, in order to demystify the technology, each scene was first videotaped, then played back so everyone could see what it looked like and make changes if necessary. The result was — at least if the press releases are to be believed — an extraordinarily tight-knit communal effort, one which in fact paralleled the story of the film.

Coup pour coup begins with violent close-ups of women at work on the line. The noise is deafening, but rythmic, and it will become the "musical" theme of the film, "found sound" which is as aesthetically successful as the artificial music that Costa-Gavras used to such effect in *Z*. A little sabotage, then eventually one of the women freaks out: "I want to live! to see the sun!" she screams, and the strike has begun, of its own accord. We watch the occupation of the factory, the women dealing with the new situation by, variously, opening their own day-care center or convincing their husbands to take care of their children; the boss's capitulation, and a significant modification of work rules. *Coup pour coup* is not the story of a revolution — the boss still owns the factory — but it does show realistically how people can take control of their lives and their situations. It seems a small success only to outsiders.

It is probably becoming clear by now that *Coup pour coup* bears a very close resemblance to Godard / Gorin's *Tout va bien*. In terms of design, both films are nearly identical: both center around a rank and file occupation of a factory, both put significant emphasis on the psychological relationships between boss and worker (as being at least as important as the relationship between worker and machine), both deal with work forces which are mainly composed of women and therefore put considerable emphasis on feminist questions as well. Both also see the struggle as three-sided: the union (C.G.T.) is almost as clearly an antagonist to the rank and file as the bosses are. Finally, both films recognize the crucial relationship between the actuality of political action (in this case factory occupation) and the subtle distortions the media make of it. (This is a much stronger theme in *Tout va bien* but it is present in *Coup pour coup* as well.) The parallelism also extends, strikingly, to the dramatic actions the filmmakers have chosen to illustrate these structures. For example: what is the best way to show a boss just how humiliating it is to work on the line? Don't let *him* take a piss when he has to. This is a central episode in both films.

But there are major differences between *Coup pour coup* (made in the summer of 1971) and *Tout va bien* (made about eight months later). Although Godard / Gorin used some real workers (and a lot of "proletarian" actors who were out of work) their film is evidently the product of one (or two) strong cinematic imagination(s). And the relationship between the artists and the

Workers confront the boss in a scene from Coup pour coup. *Showing how people can take control of their lives and their situations.*

"I want to live! to see the sun!" one of the women screams, and the strike has begun, of its own accord.

subjects is a part of the process of the film as well as its material, which is why Godard / Gorin choose to view the strike at their Jerry-Lewis-set salami factory through the eyes of "He" and "She" (a filmmaker and a journalist), and why half the film is given over to sexual politics, not on the workers' level, but on the level of the intellectuals. *Tout va bien* is therefore no doubt a more complicated film, but is it more "successful"?

If the first step of revolutionary filmmaking is revolutionary subject matter (let's call this the "Costa-Gavras level"), then the second step is communal filmmaking, a fundamental change in what the French call the *"rapports de production"* of filmmaking. And the third stage must be the proclaimed object of the Dziga-Vertov Group (Godard / Gorin): the reconstruction of film *language* as well. The question both of these films raise — and it is not a question that elicits easy answers — is where the emphasis should be put: *Coup pour coup* bothers not at all with stage three (the revolution of language), while *Tout va bien* obviously concentrates on this stage while paying relatively little attention to changes in the *rapports de production* (i.e., communal filmmaking). The "Dziga-Vertov Group" was always more an ideal than a reality and its two members have since gone their separate, individual ways.

Setting up an argument between one type of filmmaking and the other is specious, I think. There is no doubt that Godard / Gorin were on to something important, but that is no reason to criticize Karmitz and associates because they ignore that aspect of the job for the moment. Godard was apparently very depressed by the mild reception *Tout va bien* received when it was released. The problem is identifying audiences: The Dziga-Vertov films are made for filmmakers, not textile workers or meat packers. *Coup pour coup*, on the other hand, is made *by* workers *for* workers: if it is going to speak directly and cogently about its subject — factory occupation — it better not cloud the issue with cinematic neologisms. No matter how important the reconstruction of film language may be, the reconstruction of *rapports de production* (whether in film or textiles) has to take precedence. We can even extend this further as a rationale for "Costa-Gavras" level films: directed at an audience with a very low political consciousness, even they may have their valid function.

The real problem isn't who is more revolutionary than whom, cinematically, but those films that *misuse* political structures in filmmaking — Louis Malle's *Humain, trop humain*, made in the summer of 1972 at the Citroën-Rennes factory, is a case in point. This is an old-style documentary about the auto production line which maintains a falsely neutral tone of voice and eschews narration and dialogue. We are left with images and sounds which we are *supposed* to think are more objective because there is no commentary, but actually Malle's film is an impressionist lyric about the mechanics of the assembly line which unlike *Coup* or *TVB* (or *British Sounds*) prevents the attitudes of the people who do the work from coming through. It tells only half the story and half the truth is a lie. *Humain, trop humain* (the title is a key) can leave its audience with a sense that the rigid patterns of the assembly line are, by turns, poetic and dreamy pastimes, or vaguely absurd evidence of human folly. This is *sometimes* true, but because Malle rigidly avoids the dialectics of the situation — the relationships between the workers and the line, between the workers and the filmmakers, between the line and the filmmakers — he has produced an essentially false and misleading document.

The success of *Coup pour coup* is different from the success of *Tout va bien*, but no less important. There is a naturalness to the former which gives it a real vitality. Seldom has communal filmmaking resulted in such clarity and vivid effect. Everybody wins by the experience of *Coup pour coup* — not only the workers-filmmakers, but also the audiences, who can sense the honesty and passion of this personal communication.

In England, Ken Loach has done similarly effective work, operating on still another level: basically more traditional, but forging a union between filmmaker and worker simply by employing filmmakers who are working-class. (In France, the only filmmakers who really can lay claim to working-class origins are Claude Faraldo and Jean Eustache — and they are doing quite different things, of course.) Loach's television films are more important here than his theatrical features — especially *After a Lifetime* (1969) and *The Rank and File* (1970). The latter film investigates the split between workers and unions (T.U.C.), contributing some very useful insights. The kind of strike it fictionalized actually took place several months later. (*Coup pour coup* also had its real-life successors in France.) If Loach's work is more traditional it is probably no less effective: the major difference between his situation and Karmitz's being that working-class films (by, of, and for) are nothing new in England.

James Monaco

James Monaco's books, The New Wave *and* How to Read a Film, *have recently been released in paperback.*

INTERVIEW

FRANÇOIS TRUFFAUT: FEMINIST FILMMAKER?

"Women live love both sensually and intellectually. Men are amateurs, women are professionals."

A scene from The Man Who Loved Women. *"Women's reactions to the film have been about 80% positive."*

François Truffaut

By Annette Insdorf

"Cinema is an art of the woman, that is to say the actress," wrote François Truffaut in *Les Films de ma vie*, his book of critical essays. And his latest film, *The Man Who Loved Women*, demonstrates that the creator of such disturbingly fascinating heroines as Catherine (Jeanne Moreau in *Jules and Jim*) and Adèle (Isabelle Adjani in *The Story of Adèle H.*) can indeed be considered a feminist director. When I suggest this description to Truffaut—who is in town to present his film at the New York Film Festival—he shrugs modestly and acknowledges, *"The Man Who Loved Women* is perhaps a feminist film, in my own way. But I would not actually praise women in a film today. It is too fashionable. These days everybody calls themselves feminists to avoid having to tell a story. Before feminism hit the scene, I had no difficulty showing my fascination with women, as in *Jules and Jim.*"

The Man Who Loved Women traces the romantic and literary exploits of Bertrand (Charles Denner), who is obsessed with the pursuit of all women. Just as last year's *Small Change* makes peace with the world of childhood that was painfully depicted in *The 400 Blows* and *The Wild Child, The Man Who Loved Women* is an affectionate truce with the female world that tormented the male characters of Truffaut's early work.

In *The Man Who Loved Women,* each of the women can generously take or lucidly leave love, thus illustrating Truffaut's growing appreciation for "sane" women.

The incurably adolescent male is still his focus—Bertrand is "a wolf who has remained a child"—but Truffaut's former goddess figure is redefined into a group of women, each one individuated, sympathetic, autonomous, and articulate. The chain-smoking Parisian director is happy to explain the cinematic means by which he gives these female characters their integrity: "I realized that Charles Denner would be visible for two hours. Therefore, when there is a scene with a woman, I almost always favor the woman, giving her twice as much dialogue and twice as many shots to re-establish the balance."

From the forthright Martine (Nathalie Baye, who brought equal charm to her role as Truffaut's assistant Joëlle in *Day for Night*) to the joyfully intelligent Geneviève (Brigitte Fossey, formerly the child star of René Cléments's *Forbidden Games*), Bertrand's women manage to transcend mere physical attractiveness. Each assumes a unique personality, with an openness that contrasts with the absolutism of Truffaut's previous heroines. His female characters were usually literal *femmes fatales*—either dying before the end of the film (*Shoot the Piano Player, Jules and Jim, Two English Girls*) or killing the men (*The Soft Skin, The Bride Wore Black, Such a Gorgeous Kid Like Me*). But in *The Man Who Loved Women*, each of the women can generously take or lucidly leave love, thus illustrating Truffaut's growing appreciation for "sane" women.

"Women are more reflective, more whole. Men are weaker, often cowards. Women are much more in harmony with life, maybe that's why they live longer. In general, I find that men's lives are dominated by vanity and competition, they always play at cowboy or sheriff. And *la chambre des députés* strikes me as a kindergarten! Madame de Gaulle was certainly more serious than her husband. He played at being a soldier; she knew she had a husband who played

at it. A woman can live without illusions, but not a man. Perhaps this agitation of the male is a compensation for the fact that he can't bear children."

Although Truffaut is reserved, almost timid, when our talk begins, he warms to the subject: "Even in love, men don't know how to analyze their feelings, they don't take the time to think because they are too involved in their games and illusions. But women live love both sensually and intellectually. Men are amateurs, women are professionals."

As Truffaut expected, *The Man Who Loved Women* received a little negative response in France for being "misogynistic." His eyes dart excitedly as he insists, "Most of the complaints about the film being misogynistic have come from men who have decided that women were going to be offended by it. Whereas women's reactions to the film have been about 80% positive." Some viewers have not grasped that Truffaut's intent is not to endorse the obsessive and fickle behavior of his hero. "Of course Bertrand is crazy, a frenetic man haunted by women. That's why we wrote the part for Charles Denner, who has such a nervous, grave and savage side to his personality." (When Truffaut calls attention to the fact that his protagonist smiles rarely and has feverish eyes, it is hard to ignore that this could be an accurate description of himself.) "Certain scenes in the film criticize him, but ultimately he inspires sympathy. I would not be able to build a film around a character I didn't care for."

Is Bertrand a typical phallocrate? "No, he is the opposite of a guy who sees a woman in the street and invites her up for a drink. Rather, he creates incredible difficulties in order to meet her, never approaching directly. It is the complications, the detours, that interest him—and me." Whether Bertrand is preparing a conquest, or Truffaut a film, "things must happen in an indirect manner."

The degree of Truffaut's compassionate understanding of his character can be better appreciated if *The Man Who Loved Women* is compared to Fellini's *Casanova*. Shaped around the figure of a seducer, both films are meditations on art, love, and life by two of our foremost "personal" filmmakers. (Truffaut finds *Casanova* "a beautiful work which proves that Fellini is the greatest visual artist—along with Orson Welles—of the sound film.") Both Casanova and Bertrand pursue women and write memoirs. However, Fellini's emphasis is on the spectacle and narcissism of sex, while Truffaut's is on the creative process by which his hero is humanized and immortalized. In this ostensibly comic film, Truffaut interweaves dramatic tension by having Bertrand recreate and interrogate his experience through the act of writing. *The Man Who Loved Women* even raises the question, does Bertrand ultimately love books more than women? Truffaut admits, "I realized only after the film was completed that there is a rivalry between Bertrand's relationship with women and his relationships with books, as if it were impossible to blend the two."

"These days everybody calls themselves feminists to avoid having to tell a story."

This may be a revealing statement, for Truffaut's own "workaholic" existence —he is as prolific as Bertrand is promiscuous—suggests the primacy of books and films. Truffaut is a voracious reader (drawn particularly to Henry Miller, Marcel Proust, and Roland Barthès), and a voluminous writer (he has recently edited and written prefaces for three collections of essays by the monumental French film theorist, André Bazin). He rarely goes out, and when he spent the month of July in Los Angeles, the women with whom he was seen most often were his attractive daughters, Laura (18) and Eva (16). A characteristic situation was their asking him to go to Disneyland and his response, "I'd rather see a film of it."

When they did go out, it was most often to the movies: "The American film I liked best this year is Woody Allen's *Annie Hall.* It presents real people experiencing real emotions." And during his stay on the West Coast, where *Small Change* has been an immense success, Truffaut received numerous scripts about children. Does he want to direct groups of kids again? "No more films about children!" He runs his hand through long and slightly-graying hair (which seems to be the 45-year-old director's only sign of aging—he is as trim and energetic as the young rebel who made *The 400 Blows*).

Scenarios are bound to pour in again after *The Man Who Loved Women* opens in America—Truffaut will probably receive dozens of proposals for women's films. He puffs calmly on his long cigar before declaring, "Now it's time for women to make feminist films, not me. A female filmmaker—for example, Agnès Varda—should answer *L'Homme qui aimait les femmes* with something like *La Femme qui aimait les hommes.* We could use a sardonic female perspective on male behavior. And these days, men no longer know how to portray women. This is why there are no more great female stars in Hollywood. Under the pressure from American feminists, no one dares present the traditional stereotypes of passive women, sex objects, or temptresses. It is women who should depict the new roles they are playing in society."

Truffaut's next project is in fact less concerned with modern women than with the darker complexities of *The Man Who Loved Women*—obsession, language and death. Tentatively entitled *La Chambre verte* (*The Green Room*), the film is adapted from the work of another prolific and self-reflexive artist, Henry James. "It is not easy for me to talk about this film right now because I am still writing it, instinctively, and—as always—aware that I will understand it only after it is made. All I can say is that it will be a tight and enclosed film, formally linked to *The Wild Child* and *The Story of Adèle H.* So many things change when you start to shoot. You have to allow for the unintentional, for the unconscious."

Once again, a strong female character will be presented: "In my films, women always have the better roles. The big male stars are hesitant to make films with me. They are afraid of being shown as weak, not virile enough." But this won't be a problem in *La Chambre verte*: the male lead will be played by the same person who is producing, writing and directing the film—François Truffaut, an actor who is not afraid of showing male vulnerability. "I have the feeling that I just have to be true to myself," says the man who loves love, films, books, and women—though not necessarily in that order.

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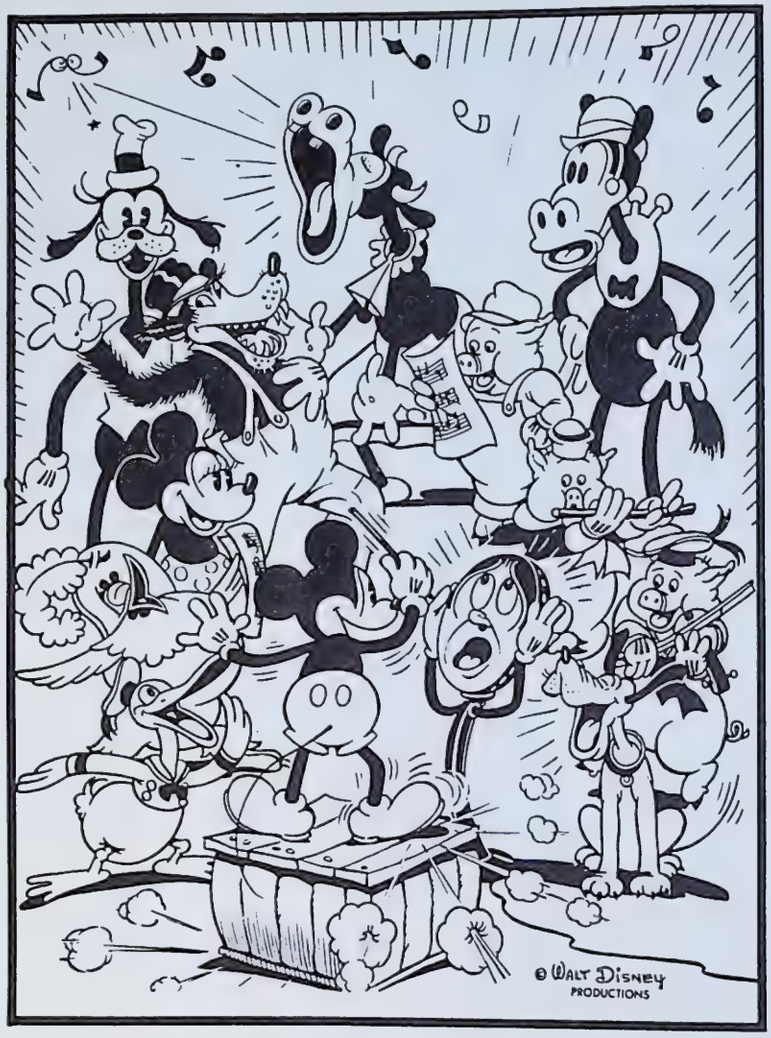
CRABQUACKS

Cartoon reality *is continually upheld by the most* unreal *sounds in the spectrum.*



By Joe Adamson

Sergei Eisenstein's pronouncement that asynchronous sound was the only aesthetic hope for the talkies found nowhere more apt fulfillment than in the hundreds of cartoon soundtracks turned out by the major studios from the coming of sound until the early Sixties.

While live-action tracks have always been (at least in Hollywood) direct, on-the-spot recordings, 30% reconstituted with ancillary effects, dubbed-in dialogue, and mood music (all elided into place with every attempt at inconspicuousness), the animation track, left out in the cold by a camera that photographs one frame at a time, became a complex *mosaic* of vagrant noises.

On the face of it, giving animated cartoons a soundtrack is a contradiction in terms: those drawings aren't making any sounds, and whatever sound you put in there has got to be a *joke,* and everybody in the audience *knows* it's a joke. The best animation directors have used that awareness to their advantage, extending and elaborating the implicit joke in a way we can all recognize — Gerald McBoingBoing opening his mouth, for example, and letting loose with every noise from a horse's gallop to an Empyrean Cataclysm.

In a Roadrunner cartoon called "Zoom and Bored," Director Chuck Jones recalls, "the Coyote got his leg caught in the harpoon gun and he was dragged along the ground: we used horns and bells and sirens and rasps and chain saws and everything *except* the right sound. And it was funny." In "Steal Wool" his luckless Coyote finds himself at one end of a giant rubber band clutching a tree, while two rocks embraced by the other end are charging headlong at him. Jones mulled the situation over with Treg Brown, the Warners Cartoon film editor and the man in charge of the menagerie of sound effects.

"He tried out several things," says Jones, "and we finally decided on the sound of a locomotive coming. And we put a crossing guard and a Doppler effect and everything on there. And when

those damn rocks came, with that sound of the train and the roar of the whistle and the crossing gate and everything, Hell, it all was enormously funny."

The Cartoon Soundtrack became a playground of inventiveness, an endless stretch of elasticity: animation's film editors would create and classify hundreds of miscellaneous sounds, speeding them up if they didn't fit, or slowing them down, or reversing them, or marrying them to yet another sound recorded for some other purpose years before, filing them under titles like "Reverse Foof," "Squidge hit," "Crabquacks," "Slapshots," "Zapsplosion," and "Comedy Effect: four or five people sucking lustily sodas" [sic]. There were editors who would make remarks like "Now, why do you want the sound of a gunshot when you pull this fella's tooth out? You don't get that kind of a sound when you pull a tooth out." They didn't last long.

Familiar noises in unfamiliar contexts became a stock-in-trade: if the clanging door of an army tank slammed funnier as a manhole cover than a real manhole cover, then it got the part; an elephant screech made a far more convincing cry of panic than anything a human throat could muster; and, faced with one of Tex Avery's haywire takes, where limbs are apt to become unhinged and eyeballs lose all sense of perspective, the clarion call of a claxon horn was sometimes the only sensible response. The champagne being uncorked in Tom Cat's face and propelling him across the room in "Little Orphan" was played by a jet plane at a time (1948) when The Jet was an unworldly futuristic force, and the sound effect was as funny as the joke. And Tom rarely rounded corners without the accompaniment of "broken skids," a real-life tire-skid doctored up to cut in and out in a practically stroboscopic pattern.

Joining two realistic sounds together was another way to produce an unrealistic effect: the smashing of a cement block combined with the resonance of a Smith bass drum was the most potent way to send a character into a brick wall: the smack of a crowbar and the honk of a bullhorn made a perfect union for any form of comic clout; and directors (like Joe Barbera) who wanted their doorslams full of moxie, were never satisfied with the limited range of the optical track ("You can only get so much sound on the soundtrack," Barbera's exasperated editor would say) and insisted on the added "percussiveness" of a simultaneous gunshot—and not just any old gunshot, either. It had to be the thunder of a French .45 or nothing.

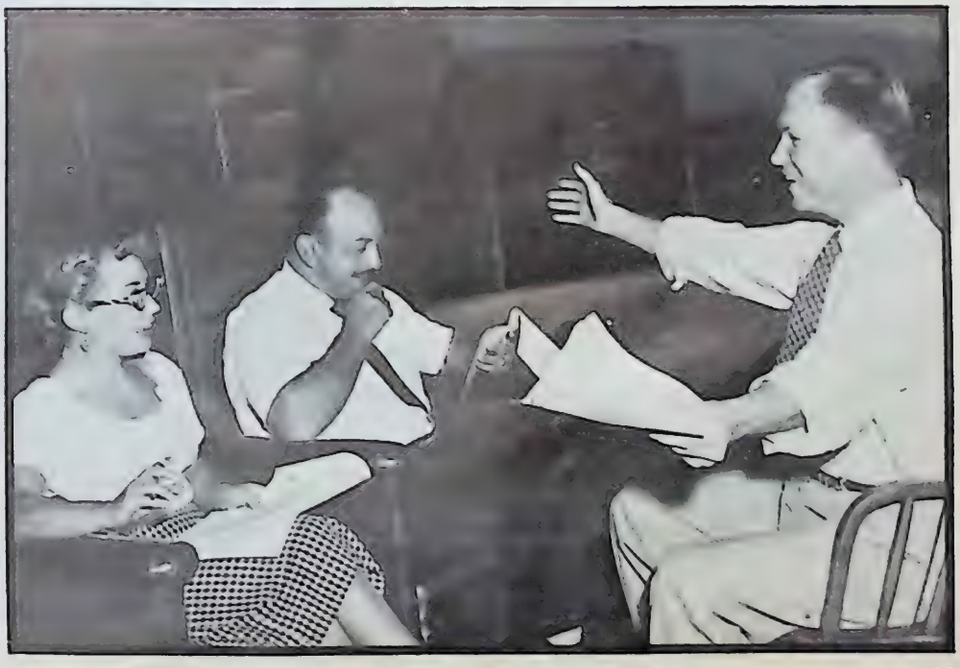
When Blanc collected his $800, it was the highest salary on record for one glottal spasm.

A sound that wasn't funny in the first place could be *cut* in a funny way. A very loud CRASH could become hysterical if its logical aftermath ("rumble, rumble...") was eliminated, leaving it abruptly and illogically hanging. There was a bloodcurdling scream on file at the MGM lot that was definitely not funny — unless you dropped off the beginning and the end, so that the fearsome, throaty holler would erupt too abruptly to be real, and then stop too suddenly to be frightening. And in the nonstop mayhem and wall-to-wall music that makes up the average cartoon, Tex Avery discovered that a noisy collision is best prefaced with the pristine absence of all sound (even, in "Senor Droopy," in the presence of a crowd of 200,000), which has the unearthly effect of riveting your eye to whatever's happening, as if a Bergman picture had somehow intruded into the clownshow mise-en-scène.

As talkies developed, it became increasingly apparent that the comedy film soundtrack couldn't go unbolstered; comedians like Stan Laurel began to dress up funny actions with any attractive sound effect that looked right, prompting agape reactions like *The Film Exhibitor's Herald*'s report on *The Perfect Day:* "In one spot Hardy hits Laurel over the head with an automobile jack and the noise from the blow sounded like the ringing of an anvil when struck with a twelve-pound hammer. It is the funniest sound effect yet recorded." In a live-action film such incongruity introduces fantasy into a realistic context. In a cartoon the same gag would accomplish the reverse: convince us of the physical reality of an event we know never really happened. It has been said many times that sound killed the Golden Age of Comedy. What is closer to the truth is that unimaginative directors failed to maintain on their soundtracks the level of imaginative unreality that had distinguished silent comedies at their best.

The selfsame collisions, contortions,

June Foray and Mel Blanc confer with Chuck Jones: the hare-brained search for just the right voice.



and confusions that don't come off in a silent cartoon (don't convince, don't amuse, don't entertain) can create an undeniably convincing effect in a sound cartoon, even combined with the most inappropriate of sounds. The reality of the whole cartoon world is continually being upheld by the most unreal sounds in the spectrum.

The business of providing the voices for animated characters is no less harebrained in its search for precisely the right touch of unlikelihood. Bill Conrad, customarily stentorian of tone, was acting as Narrator for Jay Ward's cliffhanger parody *Bullwinkle* episodes, and could never race along at quite the velocity Ward had in mind. "I get *hysterical* when I go that fast," Conrad finally protested to Ward. "Fine!" said Ward. "Sounds great!" And it's that very gibbering, panic-stricken reading that helped put the parody point across. Mel Blanc once spent sixteen days at $50 a day recording the Cat's voice for the Disney feature *Pinocchio,* and later discovered they'd changed their minds on the character interpretation and nothing remained in the finished film but a single hiccup. When Blank collected his $800, it was the highest salary on record (Guinness take note) for one glottal spasm.

People who do this sort of thing for a living (and it's a specialized talent that straight actors are rarely equal to) come equipped with an imposing fortress of tracheal membranes for flexibility and control, and to that they've added a relentless round of training and development, often self-imposed and usually initiated around the age of five (Mel Blanc created the Woody Woodpecker laugh in an empty high-school hallway, and was very nearly expelled). June Foray's amazing facility (she'll slip into Bullwinkle's nemesis Natasha Fatale at the drop of a scimitar) is matched by a range which is not even a range so much as a *range* of ranges: her accents run from Brooklyn to Vladivostok, her sizes from miniscule to behemoth, her ages from embryonic to octogenarian, and I've seen her breeding go from Fifth Avenue to subterranean.

Mel Blanc has created an empire with the Warners Cartoon characters which is unparalleled in the business: a hundred or so different voices, each one funny, convincing, and bizarre, each a variation on the next (Daffy Duck is simply Sylvester's voice played at a high enough speed to raise the pitch) but unique in and of itself, and all of them distinctive enough to be branded unmistakeably with Blanc's initials. All but a scattered few of the Warners menagerie were Mel Blanc creations (The "MeepMeep" of the Roadrunner was a sound habitually tossed out of the throat of Paul Julian, Layout Artist and sometime Director, when moving background paintings down the corridors, but contractually Blanc's screen credit gave him blanket claim on the lot.) Though Jim MacDonald could be replaced by a guy from the Inbetweening Department as the voice of Popeye, and Tex Avery's Droopy Dog seems to have been done by whoever was around at the time, nobody, but nobody, in the entire world, will ever be able to step into Porky Pig's feet.

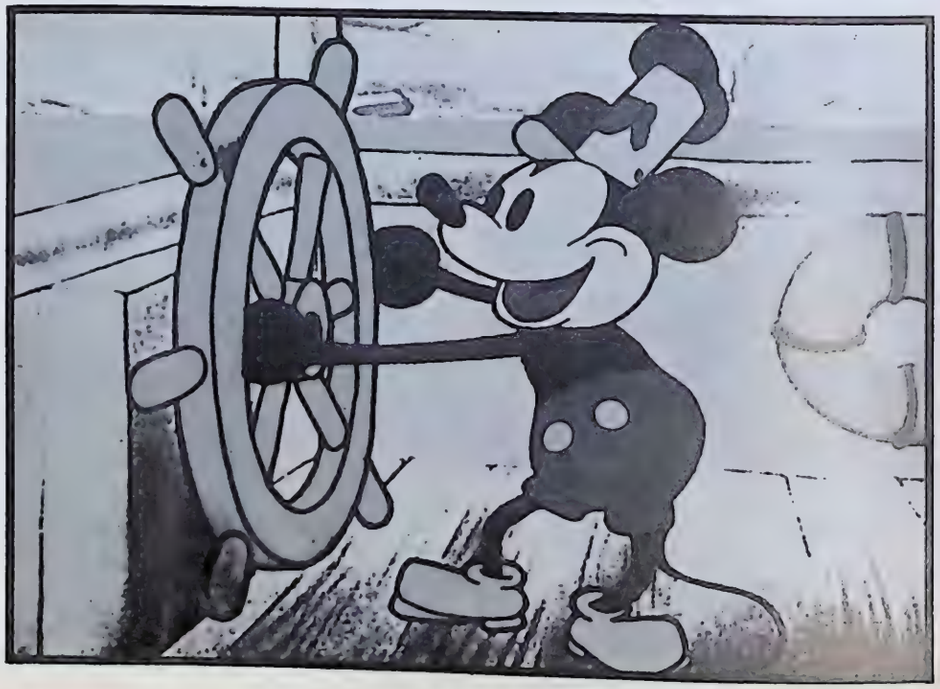
"What—no Mickey Mouse?" was repeated so often it became a catchphrase of the Thirties. Nobody ever said that about Felix the Cat or Farmer Alfalfa in the Twenties.

It was the *talking* cartoon characters, after all, who charmed their way into the hearts of the moviegoing public. "What—no Mickey Mouse?" was repeated so often it became a catchphrase of the Thirties. Nobody ever said that about Felix the Cat or Farmer Alfalfa in the Twenties.

Like almost any law that attempts to govern the cartoon universe, the rules for voices are made to be broken; whatever logic exists is there to be defied. Most of the voice people will tell you it's exaggeration that makes a cartoon voice work: take a high voice, a low voice, a French accent, a Texas twang, step it up one degree higher than plausibility permits, and it becomes a cartoon. But two of the most brilliant characters in all of animation, the Bert and Harry Piel of a long series of great TV commercials, are nothing but the voices of Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding, straight off, flat as a newsroom. The voice people will tell you the drawing has to come first, that once they see the character and know his general personality, the development of the voice can follow. But Donald Duck, one of the funniest and most popular cartoon voices in history, was simply a funny noise Clarence Nash would make in his jowlbone, until Walt Disney decided its natural destiny was to speak for a duck.

The pros explained to me in exquisite detail the flawless logic behind every one of their vocalizations: Daffy had a long beak, so it made sense he should slobber his S's all over the theater, Porky's voice ought to resemble the adenoidal grunt of a real pig, an aardvark talks through an ungainly snout and the voice that emerges would naturally be nasal, a giraffe's voice has a long way to travel, and by the time it surfaced it would perforce be a rumble.

Mickey in that first, great "talking" cartoon—"Steamboat Willie": "It was the talking *cartoon characters, after all, who charmed their way into the hearts of the moviegoing public."*



And yet the voice no one can ever forget is the sparkling tenor of Michigan J. Frog in Chuck Jones's classic "One Froggy Evening"—rich, pearly tones less reminiscent of a frog than anything in the world, Yosemite Sam, one of the tiniest humans ever put on film, has the biggest voice in the range of the optical track (the *only* voice Blanc can't do without getting red in the face). June Foray thought it was the most logical thing possible when she gave a full-sized elephant the tiniest voice she could muster: "Because she's such a great big, enormous, gigantic, elephantine creature—that a tiny voice would fit her. Haven't you seen a lot of very fat ladies... and they have tiny, little-girl voices? Maybe because they *wish* they were smaller."

It all makes perfect sense, really. If something immaculately appropriate, but exaggerated for comic effect, works well, then something with exaggerated *in*appropriateness will work better.

It was always the special province of the great animation directors to make insuperably believable the most wildly impossible, implausible, and illogical events. And it was often the soundtrack, its clamorous sound effects and its outrageous vocals, that provided the clincher when it came to putting a cartooned action across. With few exceptions, the animation that inspires reverence today is animation created after the coming of sound. But the great (and the near-great) sound cartoons of the Thirties, Forties, and Fifties are distinguished from the (not by any stretch of the imagination great) silent cartoons of the Teens and Twenties by considerably more than their narrow sliver of soundtrack. To compare just about any silent cartoon with just about any sound cartoon is to bring the point home with a vengeance. The comparison is so stacked as to be unfair.

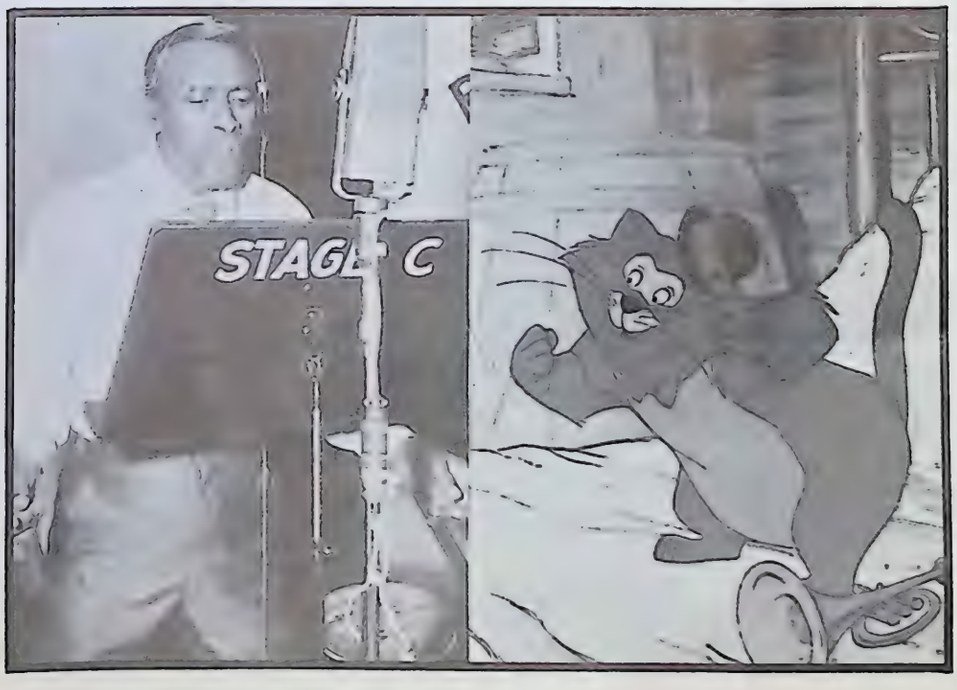
The voice no one can ever forget is the sparkling tenor of Michigan J. Frog in Chuck Jones's classic "One Froggy Evening."

Look at "Where Am I?," a Mutt & Jeff episode of 1925. 1925 is the year of *The Gold Rush, The Merry Widow, Seven Chances, The Big Parade, The Freshman, The Phantom of the Opera*—some of the grandest that Hollywood ever produced. "Where Am I?," one of the best of all silent cartoons, is the work of talented amateurs by comparison. The sixteen years that separate it from a 1941 Disney feature like *Dumbo* are paltry in comparison to the 53 years that separate *The Great Train Robbery* from *The Searchers,* but the same kind of filmic development is in evidence.

In "Where Am I?" Jeff finds himself with a pot on his head and spends the picture trying to get it off (by such practical means as spinning around in circles and waving his hands in an arc). He works his way by this stratagem to the top of an uncompleted skyscraper, wobbling among the girders and ladders in a fashion inspired perhaps by the Harold Lloyd acrobatics in *High and Dizzy* and *Safety Last* (and probably inspiring, in its turn, later and more astonishing cartoons like "A Dream Walking," "Clock Cleaners," "Homeless Hare," and "Cat Feud"). In one awe-inspiring hyper-angled down shot, Jeff, blind to the dizzying perspective, slips off a girder and tumbles in helpless pirouettes toward the traffic bustling below, and, seconds before smashing to his death, just when things look blackest for him, he miraculously scrambles back *up* again, still blind, still helpless, and secures a foothold on the selfsame girder, plummeting from full view down to a pinpoint on the screen and right back up to full view in one breathless shot. The effect is funny, it gets a laugh, but, like the film's "resolution" (the ending leaves Jeff, pot on head, blind, stuck on the girders, no hope in sight), and like its cursory dispensing of the team's straightman (in an early shot Mr. Mutt is metamorphosed into a buzz saw and drills himself into the ground and that takes care of *him*), the success of this one joke is dependent on the What-the-Hell atmosphere engendered by the whole, and remains quite independent of such niggling rejoinders as "Yeah, but *what is it* that propels him upwards again?" or "Why should the central figure find himself barely visible to the audience at the very point of the dramatic turnabout?" or even "What is logical or inevitable about this unexpected outcome to a very tangible and frighteningly conveyed situation?" or, more subtle, "What is it about this character's delineation or motivation that makes this turnabout in any way satisfying emotionally?" The logical questions are never asked because no one watching is involved enough to ask them.

Dumbo's climactic scene, the mute elephant descending precipitously to the sawdust floor, his best friend The Mouse howling panic-stricken words of encouragement into his oversized ears, the last-minute triumphant swoop into the air, the upending of lifelong foes into buckets—all this parallels "Where Am I?" in physical movement only: in emotional effect the scenes are worlds are apart.

Scatman Crothers recording the voice of Scat Cat for The Aristocats. *"An imposing fortress of tracheal membranes and a relentless round of training and development."*



This is partly because *Dumbo* has spent so much time making sure this moment doesn't just swoop down on us like a Comanche, but catches us up instead in its helpless tailspin, in its miraculous soaring. We're already *involved* in Dumbo's story.

But Disney doesn't let it go at that. Point-of-view shots of the swiftly approaching floor, up-angled closeups of a frantic Timothy screaming an implausibility we all know to be true, closeups of the goggle-eyed Dumbo, mouth agape, nothing to say, thinking God knows what—turn the fall into an extended strain on the nervous system, the last-minute swoop into emotional upsurge, and the unreality of a flying elephant into an urgent, absorbing, unquestionable reality.

None of which came to pass by chance. The difference in emotional effect is the direct result of a difference in filmmaking procedure. Story creation had developed into a heirarchy of Story Directors, Gag Men, Hiatus Detectors, and Research Assistants; the job of the animator was spread out over the shoulders of Supervising Animators, Animation Directors, Breakdown Men, Cleanup Men, and inbetweeners, all of them refining, retouching, refinishing, or, more often, rejecting the work of the others; even the soundtrack polishing that remained in the hands of a single artisan at other studios was categorized at Disney's into sound-effects cutters, music editors, and voice-track readers. It was laborious work, painstaking, meticulous, unleavened gruel, that created the most lighthearted effects at the Disney Studios. To keep up in some demonstrable measure with the enormous box-office success of his films, other cartoon studios were compelled to pay at least a fraction of the attention he did to story development, animation technique, characterization, gag construction, musicianship, and comic timing.

Sound made cartoon-making an infinitely more complicated process, but it also made it an infinitely more rewarding one.

In the silent film days, a cartoonist would sit down at his drawing board and whip out on paper just about anything that came into his brain: he was animator, director, gag man, and layout man, like any strip cartoonist. At the end of the week, the work of four or five of these men was collected, photographed, wound on a single reel, and called a cartoon. "We used to look at our own work and laugh like hell," a silent-screen animator described it to me. "But in the theater, they didn't."

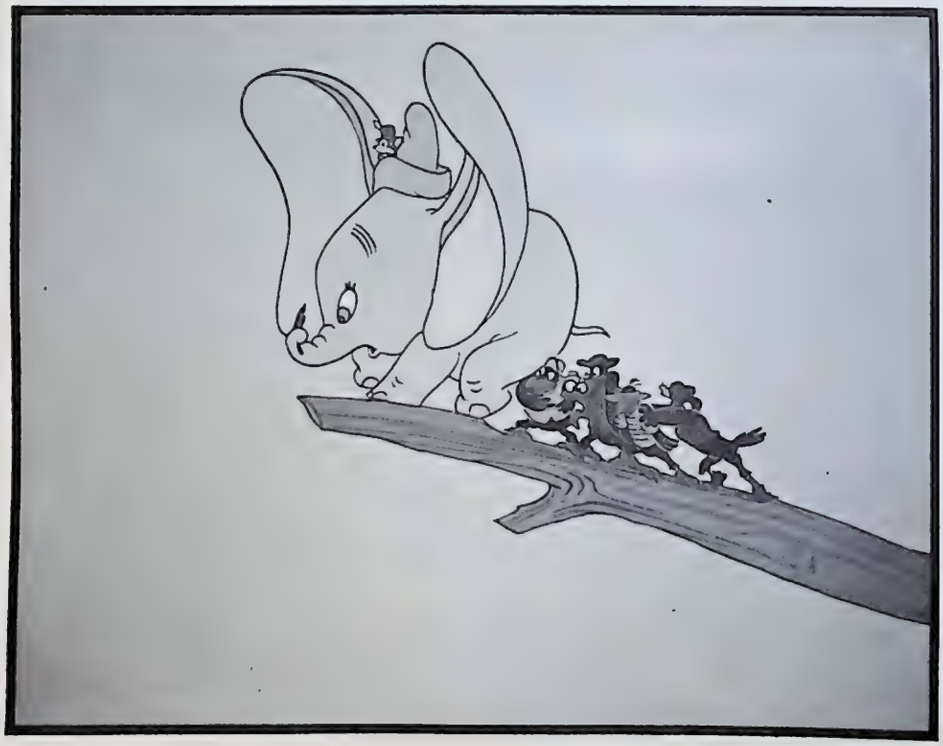
It was the elaborate pre-planning necessitated by the synchronized soundtrack that put an end to this freehand technique, and, in an evolutionary exchange, the pre-planning effected an improvement in the cartoons. Sound made cartoon-making an infintely more complicated process, but it also made it an infinitely more rewarding one.

The silent era system of animation did allow for more invention, more imagination, more improvisation, and more of a personal touch from each individual animator, and by the standards Film History is accustomed to using, this should have created the Halcyon Period (it worked for silent comedy!). What it created was a boatload of cancelled contracts and a stockpile of films that could hardly be *given* away by their distributors. And it wasn't because the cartoons failed to be clever or amusing, but because the world they presented wasn't real enough to be believed.

Where the soundtrack in live action destroyed an art form (and created a new one that took years to grow up), in animation it destroyed nothing, but on the instant galvanized a palpitating presence into active life. With typical cartoon logic, animation had arrived by the most unlikely means at the most convincing stage of its existence.

"The unreality of a flying elephant is turned into an urgent, absorbing, unquestionable reality." A scene from Dumbo.

Joe Adamson is the author of Groucho, Harpo, Chico and Sometimes Zeppo *and* Tex Avery: King of Cartoons. *He co-directed the award-winning film,* A Political Cartoon.



DIRECTORS ON SOUND

How does sound affect the way we experience film? Some distinguished directors talk about how they perceive and use sound in their movies.

Fifty years into the sound era, much though audiences may perhaps have begun to take the sound-track of their favourite films for granted, it is clear that many filmmakers are putting quite as much creativity into the audio portion of their work as they do into the visual (remember the bird sounds in Hitchcock's *The Birds*—not bird sounds at all, but created electronically). How do the men and women who make the movies think of sound? The highly-respected Swedish film magazine *Chaplin* recently polled a number of European directors, then—using the same questions (reprinted below)—*Take One* quizzed some additional filmmakers. This is a selection of the more interesting replies to both surveys.

1. Can you remember the first occasion when sound comprised a suggestive experience in an artistic way for you? In other words, the first time you experienced a sound which you knew contributed to creating an overall picture in your mind.

Michael Winner: I can only recall fragments of sound that seized me in my early film viewing: the whistle of arrows released by the English bowmen in Olivier's *Henry V,* a wondrous sound because I never realised arrows whistled, and still do not know if they really do; the maniacal laugh of Richard Widmark in *Kiss of Death;* the echoing of footsteps and water in *The Third Man*—these are sounds that stand out as clear experiences of gratification in my early filmgoing.

Mark Robson: When I was very young and living in Canada, I had gone to ski in a far remote part of the Laurentian Mountains of Quebec. On this occasion three skiers, including myself, were temporarily lost in the endless waste. We paused to figure out our bearings and to plan our next steps for survival. I was at that time struck by the quietness and solitude and an almost total absense of sounds but for the animals and birds that were in the distance. It was a strange and eerie experience that I have never forgotten.

Ken Annakin: When I first heard the score and saw the ballet of Coque d'Or, by Rimsky-Korsakov. To me the whole magical world of onion spires and Eastern Oriental "Arabian nights" was created in my mind.

Istvan Szabo: The first consciously apperceived, decisive audio-experiences were most probably the sounds of the Second World War: the air raid sirens, the noise of the airplanes, the difference in the sound of the Vibrators and Stukas, the difference in the explosions caused by bombs or mortars, and the 1944 Christmas night firing at the beginning of the seige of Budapest.

Roy Smeck, "The Wizard of the Strings," who played the banjo and guitar for the first Vitaphone film program.

Michael Ritchie: In other films, I most remember the zither music in *The Third Man,* the rain and hoofbeats in *The Seven Samurai,* and the whispers in *Cries and Whispers.*

D.A. Pennebaker: The live orchestra tuning up at the opening of *Fantasia.* Sound throughout *I Know Where I'm Going.* Short bits of music in *Le Million.*

Robin Spry: In a film called *The Man Who Changed His Mind,* about a scientist who managed to switch a man's brain into a monkey's head and vice versa. I was terrified when I heard the sounds of a monkey coming from the man. I was about 10 at the time.

Eric Rohmer: Unfortunately I have a very bad memory for sound.

René Clair: In *La mêlodie du monde,* by Walter Rultman (1929).

2. Which sound experiences in feature films have been most effective *in influencing you as a movie-goer?*

Ken Loach: The music at the end of Jancso's *The Round-Up.* After the austerity of the film, the music had a considerable impact, both dramatically and in its political significance.

Russ Meyer: I tend to lump sound effects and music together. I enjoy distant sound effects, clear, concise. *The Cincinnati Kid* comes to mind, when Steve McQueen exits a bus and strolls up a long driveway and enters a randy house via a screen porch door —the sharp crack hurls the audience right into the ugly kitchen, in close-up.

Clair: In *Broadway Melody* (1921): Bessie Love starts to cry. Her face disappears in a fade out, and a remarkable cry comes from the black screen.

Satyajit Ray: Two uses of sound which opened windows for me a) In Carne's *Le jour se lève,* the ringing of the alarm clock at the end. Deeply evocative, poignant, poetic. b) In Ford's *Fort Apache.* Two characters stand on the edge of a precipice and talk. One of them casually kicks an empty bottle over the edge, and a few seconds later one hears a faint tinkle in a gap in the conversation. I cannot explain why this made such a deep impression on me.

Winner: I would cite the electronic music in the shower murder in Hitchcock's *Psycho;* an extraordinarily fear-raising noise. The wheels of the hearse in *Dead of Night.* ...it is funny really that the most memorable sounds seem, again and again, to be sounds that are fearsome, sounds that one hears in every day life, but which become a symbol of danger when used in film terms.

Philip D'Antoni: *The Fallen Sparrow* — where the device was a man with a limp who had been the torturer of the hero, so that every time that sound or any sound similar to it was heard, it had a residual effect on the audience.

Szabo: I found the richest audio-world in Fellini's *8½.* In the extensive Baroque flow of the film, the sound frequently takes a leading role. I think that the most purified audio-world of recent times can be found in *Cries and Whispers* by Bergman. Bergman omits every superfluous sound or noise, which is unnecessary for the story, and would only divert attention, and unconsciously absorb the energies of the viewers. While in Fellini's films sound, music, speech, and noise sweep us away with their abundancy, Bergman's films, cleaned of everything that is superfluous, create tension with their emphasized purity. And there are so many different sounds leading to the bells of Bunuel.

3. When you yourself are working on a film, at what stage does the actual sound experience—the experience you want to reproduce—manifest itself to you?

Ritchie: Some sounds are in the script. For instance the ski-sounds in *Downhill Racer,* or the crowd effects in *The Candidate.* A few sounds are conceived in production. For instance, the microphone feedback in *The Candidate.* "Texture sounds" usually come in the editing period (dogs barking, babies crying).

Rohmer: I often choose my actors for the timbre of their voices. While filming, I worry only about the accurate recording of the dialogue. It is only during the mix that I really *create* with sound.

4. Can you describe any individual sound pattern *which you have constructed in any of your films which is in true harmony with the picture we see and with the overall experience, and with which you are extremely satisfied?*

Ritchie: The ski sounds in *Downhill Racer* had to be conceived in different patterns to avoid a monotony from race to race. A race on a cold sunny day had to sound different from a snowy day. Most importantly when the audience was to participate in the actual *on-skis* experience the pattern had to be a combination of the other patterns. All the ski effects had to be constructed in post production.

Spry: Although I am not satisfied with it, the sound track of a short experimental film I made called *Face* began to have a shape very closely tied to the emotional situation of the film. Virtually no voice was used in a literal way, although voice was used in various ways as a source of sound which was then abstracted and then used as material for the building of both the abstract music track and the sound track. As the visual consisted of nothing more than shots of the same face, there was a lot of room left to play with the sound.

John Barrymore and Mary Astor embrace passionately in Don Juan, *the first Vitaphone sound picture.*

Alain Robbe-Grillet: I find the expression "in harmony with" quite suspect. The role of sound is not to reinforce the image. Sound is most interesting when it contests, or perverts the image.

Ray: I think the railway train motif in the *Apu Trilogy* was effective. In Part I, the train is seen only once, but is heard at several points in the story, each time carrying a different and specific meaning.

In the second part, the train is both seen and heard in the distance from Apu's house in the village. To Apu's widowed and lonely mother, the train serves—visually as well as aurally—as a symbol of her son's driving ambition, which has taken him away from her to the city.

In Part III, Apu lives right on the railway tracks, and the trains are felt as a presence throughout the Calcutta episode. After the death of Apu's wife in childbirth, it is the distant whistle of an approaching train which suggests to Apu the idea of suicide.

Winner: I think one type of film in which sound can play a particular role is the Western. In a film I made called *Chato's Land* the alienation of a posse, self-righteous but evil, from its normal comfortable surroundings was I think achieved much by sound. That is, as this posse was led deeper into barren territory by a half-breed Apache it was pursuing, the sounds of their comfort... indoor fires, the blacksmith, people hammering in a town... gave way to the sounds of danger and isolation: hyenas, rattle-snakes, buzzards, dead horses being eaten by vultures and hyenas.

Jerry Schatzberg: I think in *Panic in Needle Park* the sound of the street is absolutely intrinsic to the film. I could not hear any music in this film. I had a score composed and tried to lay it in but it took away from the authenticity of the film and became too theatrical. Finally I used no music.

D'Antoni: In a picture I produced, *The French Connection,* it was always part of our original aim that the sounds of the city should begin to grate on your ears as the film progressed, reaching a crescendo during the chase sequence where the elevated train sound was designed to, in essence, "blow you apart."

5. Can you describe any similar individual sound pattern in any other film which has had considerable significance for your way of experiencing the film?

Ritchie: Obviously the bird sounds in Hitchcock's film, the heightened footsteps as a continuous pattern in Costa-Gavras' *Z.*

Pennebaker: *Le Million,* by René Clair; also *A nous la liberté.*

Andrej Wajda: I don't know. Probably not. The only and the best sound impressions are the actors' voices. I was happy, when in New York and viewing a Bergman film, *Scenes from a Marriage,* I heard Liv Ullman's voice. The sound of the Swedish language is to me more beautiful and mysterious than any other music I've probably heard in Bergman's films.

Robson: The scene in *Citizen Kane* when Kane's wife makes her first and second appearance in the opera "Aida". The first sequence dealt with the frantic moments before the opera begins, the backstage activities, the beginning of the opera and then the travelling shot up to the men in the catwalk of the opera house—the voices clear, close, exciting, then as the sequence develops—the voice and music receding in the background yet rounded by the mellowness of the hall. The second sequence dealt with the same scene but seen from Kane's point of view—the opera —its finish, the coldness of the response and the persistent applause from Kane that illustrated a kind of ritualistic tragedy.

Schatzberg: I think Welles' use of sound in *Citizen Kane,* with the overlapping speeches, gave great insight into the character. Kane really didn't want to listen to anyone else.

6. Sound is extremely expensive if it is correctly constructed, and most directors are forced to compromise. But if you did not have to compromise—if you had unlimited resources—how would you like to work with sound?

Pennebaker: 4 track (possibly 8 track) with all dialogue recorded in stereo.

Loach: I dislike artificially constructed sound, and only use sound actually recorded on location.

Meyer: I don't compromise, *ever.* The quality of my films attest to that, as well as my dubbing bills.

Winner: There is no doubt that *real* sound is the best. That is the exact sound not only of a particular location, but of that particular location at the exact *time* the scene is set. Whether day or night, and if night how late. Therefore if one had unlimited money I would record every single sound in the place where the scene was shot, every footstep, every effect, every door open and close... I would distance each background effect and voice in the real area to minute detail. But shooting sound that way, to real perfection, you could take far longer to shoot the sound than the picture.

7. Our surroundings grow ever more noisy; there are very few places, today, where a film director can obtain the sound he wants to achieve. Is your creative process disturbed by the fact that you often have to construct sounds in the studio and the laboratory, almost like a technician?

Wajda: Yes! This is, above all, terribly boring. I leave it therefore, to my assistants. Alas! I am afterwards forced to listen to it in my films.

Meyer: Studio sound is just as good as actual sound—if not better, cleaner, and free from background hash.

Ray: In the conditions in which we work, all dialogue has to be post-synchronised, and most effects created artificially. I hate dubbing dialogue, but I accept it as the only way out. As for "effects," I feel constructing them is part and parcel of the synthetic process that is filmmaking.
Annakin: No, on the whole I think one gains by creating sounds artificially—one has to eliminate extraneous sound and use effects as an artist and this is good.
Bryan Forbes: Strangely, perhaps sadly, real sound, actual sound, often does not sound as good as manufactured sound. I don't know why this is, nor do I care—nor does our audience care, nor does it matter. We should not give away our secrets—all art is lonely and personal and should be kept under wraps.

8. What is your impression of the function of film music today?

Ritchie: Music should never be used to *underline* or duplicate the dramatic effects of the scene. It should contrast, or add depth to the dramatic experience (cf, Kubrick's *Clockwork Orange*). In this area I'm particularly fond of the use of existing music in my film *Smile.*
Loach: I dislike superimposed music. I wish I'd learned to do without it earlier.
Wajda: Music really serves in a film to save a situation, to clarify in the simplest possible way what the director had in mind. (I am thinking here of purely illustrational music.) In a 3 or 3½ hour film the music serves to awaken the viewer and to accelerate the action.
Rohmer: "Film music is wall paper." (Igor Stravinsky). I only like bare walls.
Ray: I have always felt that background music is the one element in film that is not strictly pure, and ought to be dispensed with. It seems like an admission of inadequacy on the part of the scenarist and director to have to have recourse to an extraneous element.
Winner: Well-played music, which need not intrude on the sound-track, can create a subliminal, or even conscious heightening of mood. It can turn a scene which pictorially may be comic or easygoing into one of menace or high drama... likewise it can lighten a seemingly heavy visual image... according to the effect or the thoughts of a character in a film, music can be useful as a noise which can, as it were, come from nowhere. It need have no basis of fact from the image on the screen; although it can still vastly influence the mind of the person watching that image.
Schatzberg: If it helps further the experience use it; if it doesn't, don't use it. I am not interested in hit records from films.

9. Can you mention a few scenes—in your own films or in those of others—in which you have experienced silence as the best and most suggestive sound?

Loach: Total silence is generally artificial—if the pictures and narrative suggest that the sequence should be quiet, then it should be quiet!
Ritchie: Italian films—Antonioni, Petri, Germi—all make great use of *total* silence (e.g. *Blow-Up*).
Wajda: Unfortunately, the real silence in the cinema is the squeak of the chairs and the murmers of the audience, sometimes even the equipment. This is not silence, because these sounds also have a meaning and often in the context of the show they make the audience laugh (e.g. unexpected sneezing). Therefore the viewer is afraid of and does not want silence, because it brings him back "to earth"—to the cinema hall. Silence, therefore, has to be created artificially, through *sound* in effect.
Spry: The near silence in *Blow-Up* in the park at night. The silence in the deserted village in *L'Avventura* ...Antonioni makes frequent wonderful use of silence ...again at the end of *The Passenger.*
Annakin: I have a recollection that *Rashomon* had most effective silent patches or just the tinkling of a bell, or rustle of feet through grass.
Forbes: There is a danger during the dubbing sessions, a collective loss of nerve, which mut be guarded against. I have gound that one must resist adding too much sound at this stage. A sort of panic sets in—the film seems dead, dreary—one has looked at an individual reel too many times—all seems lost and so one adds, and the additions are not always very sensible.
Szabo: Silence is the purest form of tension, frequently the most contentful human sound. Silence always speaks about the future, silence is expectation, the question of experienced silence is "what will happen next?". Silence on the screen is meaningless, silence has to be born among the audience—then it is real silence.

10. Is the sound equipment used in film-making of sufficiently high quality so that real *silence can be achieved [as it can with professional stereo equipment]?*

Wajda: Our cinemas in Poland are awful technically. One hears nothing of my sound work inside them. It is strange, because the American films are completely audible. I know it, but I can't understand it.
Winner: The sound equipment used in film is less important in some ways than the sound equipment used in showing film in the cinemas. This is clearly the most out-dated and hopeless area of modern cinematography. To record on tape and then go to optical film for your release is immediately a terrible loss of sound quality already achieved. And in most cinemas the quality of sound played is so bad as to be laughable. How a sophisticated audience, getting used to hi-fi and stereo at home can put up with it, is a miracle.

11. Do you feel that you have to concentrate more on the capacity of the audience's imagination for filling out sound than you do for filling out pictures because of the technical deficiencies inherent in film sound?

Szabo: Frequently, we rather accept the sound, and the picture remains the secret of our shy fantasy, which we create in ourselves, according to our taste and desires. The sound of the act indicates the essence and mood of the act, but it is only part of it, which leaves the major part of our imagination, our creative ability. During mixing, we frequently feel that naturalistic pictures and realistic sound together are too much, they give too much information of the same thing, they become disturbing. In such cases, we omit the sound or the picture —strangely enough this most frequently happens in the case of birth, love, or the pictures of death. If the director honours me with omissions and only shows the essential, then I the viewer have to elaborate the enriching details, and he makes me a creative assistant of the film. Bergman only shows the essential, strictly the end result, which he today knows about the thing; Fellini only shows the particular, the particular from what he has seen, and Bunuel shows the judgment which he passed. They are only interested in this strictly expressed truth, and it is the duty of our imagination to interpret their truth, to fill it and to make the path accessible between the truths of our known world. The white spots of the omissions belong to us, viewers.

12. If technology were to provide us with the possibility of reaching higher or lower sound levels—sound levels which researchers have said can affect us mentally, even if we do not consciously register them as sound—what would you use?

Legendary tenor Giovanni Martinelli sings "Vesti la Giubba" for the Vitaphone camera, in 1926.

Spry: Indistinguishable sounds, even within the limited range of optical sounds, are used all the time. If the range is extended, no doubt all the new possibilities will be explored. Herzog already tries to hypnotize some of his audiences, so someone will surely use any new sound possibilities to bend our minds.
Meyer: My films are strictly up front—subliminal, hardly!
Rohmer: I only believe in that which is conscious.
Winner: The possibility of using subliminal, and even sound from say thirty different loudspeakers, would bring so much richness to a film. But what a time it would take to complete a film if all these added benefits were possible!
Robson: In the film *Earthquake* I used extremely *low end* frequencies to create an illusion and to affect the emotions of the audience. The results were very interesting and more or less successful.
Szabo: We already use sounds which are on the brink of apperception. The sharp high-pitched sounds of a generator on the tape, creates a strange tension, without the sound becoming conscious. A musical motif or a fragment, the melody of a sentence, narrated with a particular emphasis—can recall the once-occurred scene and creates a feeling without the viewer recognizing the sound. The atmosphere of the surroundings frequently has to be used under the value limit so that it should not disturb the scene, but it cannot be omitted for it would result in a dead silence.

13. What is the creative sound engineer like and how do you work with him or her?

Loach: He needs to be sensitive to the content and the development of the film, to the qualities of the location, to the people in the film, to be unobtrusive, to solve his own problems whenever possible, to help put people at their ease, *not* to tell people in the film to speak louder, to be quiet and friendly. I think that good sound—authentic, accurate sync. sound—is very necessary, and that many of the skills of the recordist are undervalued, such skills as finding the right perspective, being sensitive to the atmospheric quality of the location, and developing a sympathetic understanding with the cameraman and the people in the film. The tendency to post-sync. means that all these skills are lost.
Forbes: Technical skill can be acquired, but all the technique in the world will not be sufficient if the manipulator of that technique lacks heart and imagination.

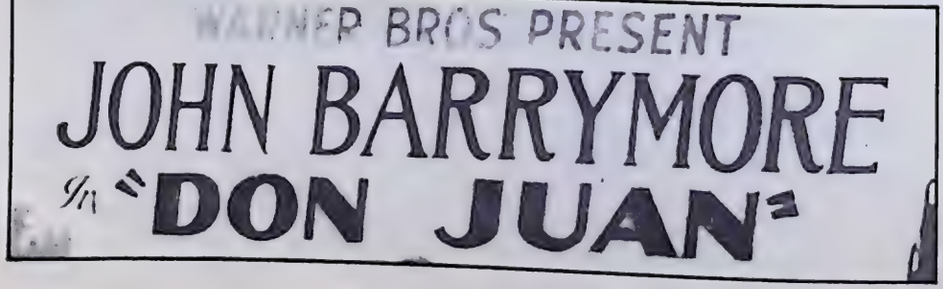
14. Your rules for sound in film?

Wajda: I don't have any rules. I am (in my opinion) quite deaf. I need and desire quiet. I hate noises. I don't own a radio (I've never had one) or a loudspeaker. Perhaps this is why I am so very sensitive to sound. When something pricks my attention, it stays in my memory.
Spry: To listen.
Meyer: Clean, brash and loud.
Winner: Use the real sound whenever possible. That is, nearly all the time. Re-record as little as possible. Falsify as little as possible. Take the time and the money to get genuine sounds from the place they truly emanate. Use the sound in relation to the story, and moment by moment, in relation to the characters and their mood. Then the audience sometimes hears what it would hear if it were present at a scene; and at other times hears the sound as if through the ears of a character in the film. After all, sound has a double function: one is to let people hear what is going on: the second and most important is to help them experience what the director wants brought out at any particular moment.
Robson: My prime rule for sound on film is to have a clear equalized dialogue track. That is the foundation of the film. There is nothing that bothers me more in viewing a film than when I cannot hear clearly what is being said.

15. Finally, would you make a list of the films or individual scenes in which sound (music, dialogue, effects, and the type of subliminal sound mentioned in Question 12) has been used in an intelligent, knowledgeable, effective and suggestive manner?

Loach: I find this difficult to answer, because if the sound is right, it's unobtrusive, and I don't notice it!
Wajda: There are such films, there are such scenes. So very many. I swear—I have seen them!
Spry: Some filmmakers who usually have exceptional sound tracks are: Kubrick, Antonioni, Eisenstein, David Lean, Arthur Lipsett, some of the New York underground filmmakers.
Robbe-Grillet: I would like, especially, to list my own! Whatever one may think of them, from this point of view in any case, they are exemplary. Particularly *L'Homme qui ment* (1968) and *Le Jeu avec le feu* (1975).
Ray: Some directors display in their films a greater preoccupation with sound and more sophistication in its use than others. Obviously the first condition for this is that the director enjoys complete artistic freedom. I would put Bergman (especially in his later films) first amongst these directors. *Silence, Persona, Cries and Whispers* are worth studying for their sound tracks alone. Others I would include in this list are Kurosawa (*The Throne of Blood* in particular), Renoir (*La Règle du Jeu*), Cocteau, Lang, Hitchcock, Bresson.
Winner: In a way the best sound is not remembered, just as the best film music is not remembered. A good tune is not necessarily good film music, it might just make a good commercial record. Good sound should increase the overall value of the film without sticking out and saying "Listen to me, I'm a water tap dripping in a tunnel." I can more easily remember films —indeed almost most of them—where the sound was obviously bad, or just plain missing: that awful moment where you say "It's only a film."
Robson: *Dr. Zhivago,* David Lean; *Stagecoach,* John Ford; *A Man for All Seasons,* Fred Zinnemann; *Champion,* Mark Robson; *A Man and a Woman,* Claude Lelouche. These films, while not all afflicted by subliminal sound or editing, have a rare combination of meticulous balance between dialogue, sound effects, music, which underpin the photographic image in almost perfect harmony.
Forbes: In my own film *Seance on a Wet Afternoon,* John Barry scored the kidnapping sequence of the child entirely—we used no other sound effects. The result is most satisfying to me. I remember the sound in Clément's *Les Jeux interdits* — brilliant, throughout. The sound in Blatty's *The Exorcist* was compelling. Again in one of my own films (and I apologise for including so many but obviously I have a better working knowledge of what went on) —this time *The Whispers*—my dubbing editor Janet Davidson provided a masterly track which combined with John Barry's sparse score gave the film exactly the lonely quality I wanted. She made a dripping tap convey emotion—no mean feat.
Szabo: I particularly admire the sound of Bunuel's films, but I feel the same about Fellini—especially in *La Strada, 8½,* and *Amarcord;* or Bergman—I would emphasize the sounds and silences of *Persona* and *Cries and Whispers.* But the sounds of Antonioni were also exciting—in *L'Avventura, La Notte,* and *Blow-Up,* here, for example, the wind in the park, or the sounds of Wajda, in *The Sewer,* and the omni-telling of the wardrobe door screeching in *Ashes and Diamonds,* the wind-caused creaking of the overturned cross, the trembling of the porcelain cups, and the noises coming from the hotel and revealing its world.

Due to their own crowded schedules, a number of directors that we polled were unable to send us their replies to our questionnaire in time for this issue's deadline. We hope to publish their responses in a forthcoming *Take One.*



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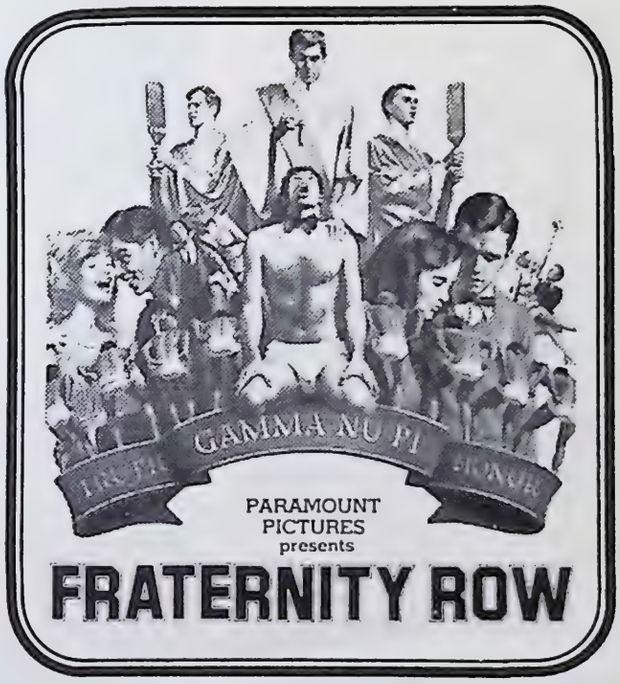

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THE JAZZ SINGER

Al Jolson was the Mick Jagger of his time. If Jessel had starred in The Jazz Singer *we might still be making silent movies.*

By Audrey Kupferberg

On October 6, 1927, *The Jazz Singer,* starring Al Jolson and based on the play by Samson Raphaelson, premiered at the Warner Theatre in New York City, and the feature film found a voice. The immediate impact of the movie was not comparable to that of the onrushing trains of the first moving pictures. Sound was news but not that new—there were immediate predecessors to the *Jazz Singer.* A year before on August 6, 1926, *Don Juan,* a John Barrymore swashbuckler with a synchronized musical score, had opened at the same Warner Theatre. Critics of the time felt that the Vitaphone (as the Warners called their sound-on-disc system) was a temporary novelty for the major houses and a practical means for small theatres to provide good symphonic musical accompaniment, but no one felt that a revolution was about to begin.

Two months after the appearance of *Don Juan,* on October 7, 1926, Warners presented another feature, *The Better 'Ole,* with a synchronized musical score. Accompanying it were two Vitaphone shorts. In one, George Jessel delivered a comedy monologue and sang, and in the other Al Jolson sang a few of his favorite numbers. The next day, *The Film Daily* predicted that the Vitaphone would create, as did radio, its own stars:

> *This was amply demonstrated last night by Al Jolson and George Jessel. By the cleverness of their performances and the appeal of their personalities, they made an instantaneous impression upon the audience. To what extent this vogue might extend if seen and heard regularly over the Vitaphone, no one can conjecture.*

The Warner Brothers were well aware of the potential of the Vitaphone process, and took a considerable risk during 1926 and 1927 to create films and equip theaters to make feature sound films economically feasible. Back in April,

Al Jolson—"hot and jazzy."

1926, the Warners had organized the Vitaphone Corporation and took full control of it. Then they made a deal with the Victor and Brunswick recording companies and the Metropolitan Opera to present its artists exclusively on the Vitaphone. By January, 1927, they had organized a circuit of fifty sound-equipped theaters, and by October that number had grown to 260. Hoping to insure themselves against the dangers of novelty and passing fancy, the Warners wanted to get audiences used to sound, and so shot more than a hundred one-reelers which they offered as a steady program to theaters throughout the country. This careful preparation made it possible for the Warners to capitalize on the amazing New York success of *The Jazz Singer,* and to parlay that achievement into a box office bonanza throughout America.

Although the success of *The Jazz Singer* stemmed mostly from its use of sound, its story, too, had strong appeal. Its author was Samson Raphaelson, who went on to become a well known Broadway playwright and the author of a number of screenplays, among them Ernst Lubitsch's *Trouble in Paradise, The Shop Around the Corner,* and *Heaven Can Wait,* and Alfred Hitchcock's *Suspicion.*

The story of *The Jazz Singer* was born ten years before the Warner brothers produced it. In 1917 Samson Raphaelson, a senior at the University of Illinois, saw Jolson perform in a musical revue at a theater in Champaign. That performance was in *Robinson Crusoe, Jr.,* and among Jolson's songs were "Where the Black-Eyed Susans Grow," "Yaaka Hula Hickey Doola," "Where Did Robinson Crusoe Go With Friday on Saturday Night," and "You're a Dangerous Girl." The material was trite, even silly, but Jolson's delivery was hot and jazzy. Raphaelson had seen top vaudeville and musical comedy headliners entertain in touring companies, but none had the fervor of Jolson. Raphaelson told me that only among the cantors chanting prayers in the synagogue had he noted such spirit and intensity. A few years later, Raphaelson wrote a short story about the conflict between a young man's desire to sing jazz in theaters and his duty to chant prayers in the synagogue according to the tradition of his family. *Everybody's Magazine* published "The Day of Atonement" in January, 1922.

Two years later, Raphaelson was working as a cub reporter on *The New York Times.* A college chum, Peewee Byers, who played the saxophone with Paul Whiteman's band at the Palais Royale, invited Raphaelson to the New York night club, and the author told him that he had begun to make a play of "The Day of Atonement." His friend said that he would mention the project to Jolson. Raphaelson thought his pal was name-dropping, and expected to hear no more of the matter.

Not long after, Raphaelson returned to the night club to have a drink with his

friend. Peewee said that Jolson was there and would like to meet him. Jolson had read the story and liked it. "I'll play in it. I'll tell you what to do." He went on to describe a typical Shubert Winter Garden musical. Humbly, Raphaelson said that he loved Jolson, that indeed Jolson had inspired the story, but that the work would have to be played as a drama without a host of songs, maybe one song at a certain moment. Jolson wanted a writer to tailor a musical to his personality, and Raphaelson was not that man. Raphaelson went on to write the play by his own lights, and Jolson came to see the opening. As Raphaelson tells it, after the show, leading man George Jessel, then an experienced vaudevillian who was trying to establish himself as a dramatic star, came center stage to accept the gratitude of the audience for accepting "my little play." Jolson stood up immediately and yelled "Author, author!" Jessel was forced to acknowledge Raphaelson.

Though Jolson remained interested in the play, it was Jessel whom audiences in New York and across the country applauded as Jack Robin, the jazz singer. For two years, Jessel made his living by appearing in Raphaelson's drama, so it was only natural that during the shooting of *Private Izzy Murphy,* a Warner feature starring Jessel which was released October 30, 1926, the entertainer had prodded the Warners to buy the screen rights to *The Jazz Singer.* Warner Brothers was in a state of expansion and lacked ready funds with which to purchase the rights to the Broadway success; however, on the basis that its religious theme would ingratiate them with the public, and furthermore that its musical story line might afford them a chance to use their new Vitaphone equipment, the Warners bought *The Jazz Singer* for $50,000 plus, payable in notes dated as far in advance as 1928. Jessel signed a contract to play in the film, and left Hollywood to continue touring the country as Jack Robin.

Several months later, with the success of *Private Izzy Murphy* and the Vitaphone shorts behind him, Jessel returned to the West Coast Warner studio to shoot *The Jazz Singer.* Complications arose. At the time the contract had been drawn up, the Vitaphone system had had limited exploitation, and in consequence Jessel had signed to act in a silent photoplay. Although previously he had pressed the Warners to add songs to the film, now he advised the producers to shoot it silent. It seems Jessel intended to

continue to play Jack Robin on the stage for the rest of his career. A friend pointed out that a sound film of the play would put the stage show out of business. Also, as he goes on to explain in his 1943 autobiography, *So Help Me*, Jessel opposed the ending of the screenplay in which Jack Robin sings to his mother in a theater. (The stage play ends with Jack chanting the "Kol Nidre" prayer while his theatrical producer and sweetheart Mary Dale hope that someday Jack will return to the theater.) Jessel writes that he pleaded with Harry Warner to keep the photoplay silent and true to the original plot, or give him a bonus. However, the company was strapped for funds and when Harry refused to pay more money, Jessel refused to do the picture.

Jack Warner tells the story another way. In his book *My First Hundred Years in Hollywood,* Warner says Jessel had signed to play in the silent photoplay for a salary of $30,000. When the film was ready to go into production, Warner telephoned Jessel in New York and told him to leave for the West Coast. Jessel noted that his original contract mentioned nothing about singing and hinted that he wanted more money. Warner offered him $10,000 extra, but Jessel refused to trust an oral contract and insisted upon receiving a binding letter from Harry Warner before boarding the Twentieth Century Ltd. for Hollywood. Jack Warner was insulted by Jessel's distrust and told him that if he wouldn't take his word as a binding deal, he could forget the project. Jessel stayed in New York, and the Warners started looking for another leading man. (Jessel made two subsequent films for Warner Brothers to fulfill contractual commitments—*Ginsberg the Great* and *Sailor Izzy Murphy.* Both pictures were silent, and, according to Jessel, "shown in a few penitentiaries and comfort stations." *Variety*'s review of *Ginsberg the Great* commented, "George Jessel, its star, is unfortunate in being its star.")

"Wait a minute, I tell ya. You ain't heard nothing. You want 'a hear 'Toot Toot Tootsie?' "

While the Warners sought a replacement for Jessel, Jolson was starring in his successful stage show, *Big Boy,* at the Broadway Theater, Denver. The show had played to full houses in cities across the country and was about to climax its 43-week tour with a 6-week run in Los Angeles, and then disband. In retrospect, the Warners seem negligent in not approaching Jolson as soon as Jessel bowed out. Not only was he characteristically suited to play Jack Robin, but he was making headlines as a Vitaphone star. For example, in Minneapolis the name "Jolson" took up almost an entire advertisement, whereas "Vitaphone" and the name of the feature film were in smaller type. Jack Warner says in his autobiography that he ordered company executive Morrie Safier, who was in Denver at the time, to ask Jolson how much money he would accept to play in *The Jazz Singer.* Jolson answered $75,000—a third down, in cash, and subsequently $6,250 a week. Warner okayed the deal.

According to Jessel, the argument on the telephone was only a temporary quarrel, and he took the train to Hollywood. At the Warner studio, Jessel

saw the screenplay for the first time, and, upset by the ending, raised hell and walked out. That evening he visited Jolson at the Biltmore Theatre in Los Angeles, and explained his reasons for refusing the part. Jolson assured him that he had acted correctly, and it was not until the next morning that Jessel learned, from the newspapers, that Jolson had signed to play in *The Jazz Singer.*

The Jazz Singer began shooting in the first part of July, 1927. In June, four 90'x150' sound stages had been built at the Warners' Hollywood studios to accomodate the Vitaphone. Bryan Foy, who had directed many of the Vitaphone shorts, was named Director of Vitaphone Productions by Harry Warner, the newly elected President of the Vitaphone Corporation. In late June, the studio announced that no visitors would be permitted on the set without the okay of Darryl F. Zanuck or Jack Warner, Executive Head of Warner Brothers Studio.

No dialogue was included in the original screenplay for *The Jazz Singer.* Reports agree that the talking in the film resulted from Sam Warner's hearing Al Jolson ad-lib a few words to Louis Silvers and the audience between the "Dirty Hands, Dirty Face" and "Toot Toot Tootsie! (Goo'bye)" numbers: "Wait a minute. Wait a minute, I tell ya. You ain't heard nothing. You want'a hear 'Toot Toot Tootsie'" (Cut to a long shot of audience. Jack is out of the shot but his voice continues over the image) "Three choruses. In the third chorus I whistle. Now give it to 'em hard an' heavy. Go right ahead, Lou."

The Jazz Singer had an advantage over its predecessors in that it was the first Vitaphone production to be filmed in the new Warner Brothers West Coast sound studios. Fitzhugh Green, in his book *The Film Finds its Tongue* reports that the silent scenes were shot first and that when it came time to film the sound portions, each camera was enclosed in a glass booth to prevent the noise of the apparatus from registering on the soundtrack. (Placing the camera behind glass sometimes produced a glowing double-image effect. This effect becomes evident to anyone who has the opportunity to view a high-quality 35mm print of *The Jazz Singer.* When Jack Robin appears in blackface on a dimly-lit stage, his white collar and cuffs glow as he sing "Mammy.") The Vitaphone system was also housed in a glass booth, inside which the sound volume could be regulated. At a rehearsal, the director determined proper microphone placement, and technicians positioned the microphones. Two or three rehearsals followed during which the sound mixer in the monitor room adjusted switches to decide which sounds to come down on and whether the actor should get closer to the microphone. Then cameramen marked the starting frames, those frames in the projector gate, by perforating them with a ticket punch. The technicians at the recording apparatus set the waxes, the original discs, by placing the needles at the starting position—the inside of the record, since Vitaphone discs play from the innermost groove to the outer edge. They made two to five recordings of each take because play-back ruins a wax. A three-phase alternating current worked the cameras and recording equipment, which were set into synchronized motion by a master switch. Then the director ordered all quiet on the set, the soundproof doors were shut, and the cast and crew shot the scene. Alan Crosland directed the last take August 7, 1927.

It was not until the next morning that Jessel learned, from the newspapers, that Jolson had signed to play in *The Jazz Singer.*

According to Jack Warner, his brother Sam asked scenarist Al Cohn to write a short talking sequence for Jolson. Jack Robin returns to his parents' flat to visit his Mama several years after leaving home. He sings a jazz song for her and speaks to her about the happy times they will share if his play succeeds. Though Cohn is credited for scripting the scene, the spontaneous acting and informal dialogue between Jack and his mother give the impression that the scene was ad-libbed. There is absolute silence as the scene begins. Jack guides his mother to a chair and takes a seat at the piano. Then, he plays the introduction to "Blue Skies."

1. Medium close up. Jack plays and sings "Blue Skies."
2. Medium close up of Mama. Although Jack is out of the shot, his voice is heard over the image.
3. Shot No 1.
4. Full shot. Mama listens while Jack finishes the first chorus. Jack's voice heard over the image.
5. Shot No 1. Jack thumps the piano keys and Mama listens.
Jack: "You like that, Mama?"
Mama: "Yes."
Jack: "I'm glad of it. I'd rather please you than anybody I know of. Oh, darling, will you give me something?"
Mama: "What?"
Jack: "You'll never guess. Shut your eyes, Mama. Shut 'em for little Jackie. Haw, I'm gonna steal something. [He kisses her.] Ha ha ha ha."
Mama: "Oh, my baby!"
Jack: "I'll give it back to you someday. You see if I don't. Mama, darling, if I'm a success in this show, well, we're gonna move from here."
Mama: "Oh, no."
Jack: "Oh, yes. We're gonna

Jackie, Mama and girlfriend Mary Dale. "He's not my boy any more. He belongs to the whole world now."

move up in the Bronx. A lot of nice green grass up there and a lot of people you know. There's the Ginsberg's, the Goldbergs, oh, a whole lot of 'bergs.' I don't know 'em all. And I'm gonna buy you a nice black silk dress, Mama. You'll see, Mrs. Friedman, the butcher's wife, she'll be jealous of you."

Mama: "Aw, no."

Jack: "Yes, she will, you see if she isn't. And I'm gonna get you a nice pink dress that'll go with your brown eyes."

Mama: "No, no. I don't..."

Jack: "What do you mean 'no'? Who is tellin' ya? What do you mean 'no'? Yes, you'll wear pink or else. Or else you'll wear pink. Hum hum hum hum. And, darlin', I'm gonna take you to Coney Island."

Mama: "Yes?"

Jack: "Yes, we're gonna ride on the shoot-the-chutes. And you know the dark mill?"

Mama: "Yes?"

Jack: "Ever been in the dark mill? Well, with me it's all right. I'll kiss ya and hug ya. You'll feel..."

[*Jack mumbles and laughs with Mama who strokes and nudges his arm.*]

Mama: "Kiss me?"

Jack: "Now, Mama, Mama. C'mon now. You're gettin' kittenish. Mama, listen. I'm gonna sing this like I will if I go on the stage. You know, with the show. I'm gonna sing it jazzy. Now get this. 'Blue Skies...'"

6. Shot No 1. Jack continues to sing, "Smilin' at me..."

7. Shot No 4. Papa enters in background as Jack sings.

8. Close up of Papa. The Cantor looks horrified.

9. Shot No 1. Jack sings.

10. Shot No 8. The Cantor speaks, "Stop." The song ends abruptly.

11. Medium close up. Jack sits at piano. The camera angle differs from previous shots in this sequence. Since the film returns to the silent medium at this point, it is possible that this shot was photographed separately from the Vitaphone portion.

12. Medium close up. Mama's expression registers fear and disappointment.

Jolson says his lines with such a spontaneity that he seems to be ad-libbing a good deal of the dialogue. Eugenie Besserer, who plays the mother, seems self-conscious, not quite knowing what to do. She awkwardly tugs on Jolson's arm, and he appears to be speaking not only to his mother but to an actress who was rather embarrassed at the prospect of having to reply to Jolson's enthusiastic delivery. He playfully warns her, "Now, Mama, Mama. C'mon now. You're gettin' kittenish." There is a charm in the awkwardness of this situation, and the intimacy achieved by the close positioning of the camera captures the impromptu quality.

Theaters that could not afford to install the Vitaphone system played a silent version. One clever exhibitor engaged a singer named Ben Gold to sing the Jolson songs during the film.

The Jazz Singer is basically a silent films with songs, but songs are used to further the plot of the film, and it is through songs that character revelations occur. It is when Jack Robin attends a concert given by Cantor Joseff Rosenblatt that we first note the young man's sense of guilt in straying from tradition. It is at the dress rehearsal for *April Follies*, as Jack sings "Mother, I Still Have You," that Mama realizes, "He's not my boy any more. He belongs to the whole world now" (film title). As the Cantor lies dying, and through an open window hears Jack sing the "Kol Nidre" in the synagogue next door, he learns that his son has fulfilled his family obligations. Even the happy ending is presented through a song. Jack sings "Mammy" as Mary Dale looks on from the wings and Mama smiles from the audience.

In New York, and later in every city where it played, *The Jazz Singer* proved a sensation. In the hope that this film might solve box office problems which had been forcing exhibitors to rely upon spectacles, big stage shows, and double features to attract audiences, an editorial in *Motion Picture News* on October 28, 1927, stated,

> *Looks like the sound movie might supply that one mysterious thing that the picture lacks today in today's public favor.*
>
> *If so, we'll have another era, too —in motion pictures.*

By February, 1928, *The Jazz Singer* had opened in every major city across the country. The film played eight weeks and more in towns that traditionally held films for only one week.

Theaters that could not afford to install the Vitaphone system played a silent version. According to *Variety*, one clever exhibitor overcame the limitation by engaging a singer named Ben Gold to sing the Jolson songs during the showing of the film.

Whether the success of *The Jazz Singer* was contingent upon the sound aspects of the film, Jolson's performance, the smooth quality of the silent sequences, or a combination of these factors is hard to determine. As a silent film, *The Jazz Singer* is an attractive production, a sentimental, well-acted drama, but it might have been buried in a feast of fine films released at the same time: F.W. Murnau's *Sunrise*, John Ford's *Four Sons*, Charlie Chaplin's *The Circus*, King Vidor's *The Big Parade*, Ernst Lubitsch's *The Student Prince*, and Josef von Sternberg's *The Last Command*. Perhaps Jolson was the key to the picture's box office success. He had been a top-drawing entertainer since 1912, and had completed several cross-country tours, breaking house records. The theater-going public was eager to see and hear Jolson. Reviews of the film stressed his persuasive acting and a voice with a tear in it. The year 1928 proved to be one of the most active of his career.

Meanwhile, George Jessel signed a contract with a new film company, Tiffany-Stahl Productions, to make films for $25,000 a picture, substantially less than he would have been paid for *The Jazz Singer*. His stint as Jack Robin on the stage ended. He later recalled in his autobiography:

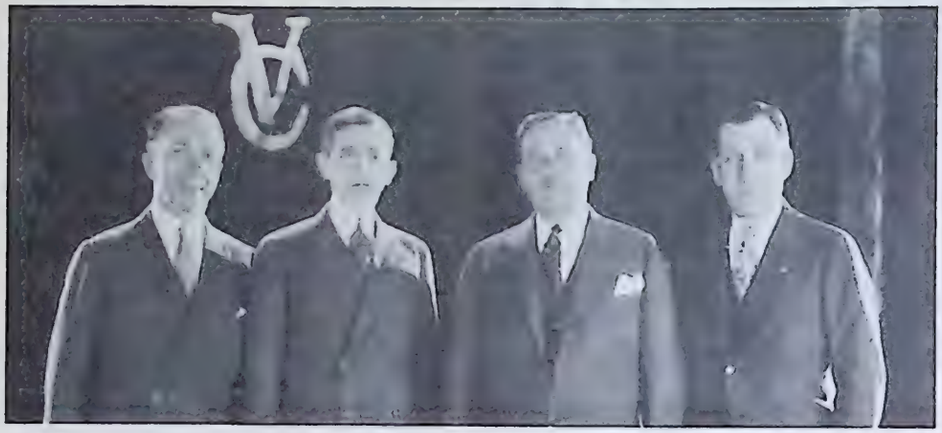
> *A week or two after the Washington engagement the motion picture of* The Jazz Singer *with Al Jolson was sweeping the country, and I was swept out of business. I couldn't compete with a picture theatre across the street showing the first sound picture in the world, and everything else that the big picture houses give you for fifty cents, while the price at my theatre was $3.00. So the curtain fell on my* The Jazz Singer *and I made a curtain speech to a very small audience, berating what had been done to me in Hollywood.*

The box office strength of *The Jazz Singer* threw Hollywood into a state of

revolution. What would be a milestone in the history of the cinema was a millstone around the necks of film producers in 1928. The public demanded talking pictures. Film production companies had to comply or die. R.C.A., Pathé, F.B.O., Sennett and Tiffany-Stahl applied for sound system licenses in 1928. There were setbacks. The earliest sound features suffered from primitive camera-work and pompous dialogue. *Tenderloin*, a Warner Brothers film which premiered in March, 1928, included two talking sequences so stilted that they were scorned by first nighters and later removed in part. Theater musicians protested the mechanical soundtracks that were replacing them, and silent film players squawked about the New York stage performers who were winning top roles in Hollywood sound productions, but the revolution begun by *The Jazz Singer* could not be stopped.

Audrey Kupferberg is Associate Motion Picture Archivist for the American Film Institute, where she previously worked on the AFI Catalog: Feature Films 1961-70 *and set up a master research file for a forthcoming volume on 1911-20.*

OPENING NIGHT:
A Memoir from the only Warner who was there



Harry and Sam Warner [far left and far right] pose with Will Hays and Walter Rich [president of Vitaphone], just before the premiere of Vitaphone sound pictures.

October 6, 1927 was a crucial date for the Warner brothers, but Doris Warner Vidor, Harry's daughter and director Charles Vidor's widow, remembers it chiefly as a day of great personal grief. Her uncle Sam, the Warner who first spotted the Western Electric equipment that would revolutionize the industry, died on October 5. On the following day, when *The Jazz Singer* opened in New York at the Warner Theatre, the surviving Warners were in Los Angeles arranging for their brother's funeral. Thus, Doris Warner was the only member of the family who actually attended this historic premiere.

Ms. Vidor graciously shared her memories of that evening with me recently. She stressed the importance of remembering that no one set out to alter an industry. Initially, sound was developed to provide musical sound tracks for feature films. No one seriously considered the possibility of all-talking pictures with written and spoken dialogue. Sound was also seen as a means of bringing the foremost vaudeville and concert performers to the theatres all over America via the shorts which most movie houses could substitute in lieu of the live shows that accompanied films in metropolitan picture palaces. Jolson's spontaneous interpretation of dialogue unwittingly extended the perimeters of the Warners' vision, creating in its wake a catastrophic period of theater reconversions, destroyed careers, and cutthroat tactics among studios, exhibitors and distributors.

The permiere, held on the night before the Jewish holiday Yom Kippur (an appropriate coincidence, given *The Jazz Singer*'s plot), vindicated the tremendous gamble Ms. Vidor's father and uncles had taken. The Warners had staked everything on what was basically an expensive experiment. Her father had pawned her mother's jewelry and moved the family into a small apartment in order to raise money for the project. (Harry Warner was the president of Warner Bros. He ran the New York office, raised the money and handled the studio's banking).

Ms. Vidor was very young at the time, but she recalls she had heard a great deal of talk among her father and his brothers about how much was riding on *The Jazz Singer*. She doesn't recollect who went with her to the premiere, but she *does* remember crying over the loss of Sam, one of her favorite uncles, through most of the film. She admits, however, that halfway through the movie, her sorrow gave way to an awareness of what was going on around her. When Jolson would sing a song, the audience applauded, an unheard-of response in a movie theater at that time. The excitement mounted as the film progressed, and when Jolson ad libbed the first line of dialogue to be uttered in a motion picture, the audience literally became hysterical. Ms. Vidor recalls that by the film's end, people were on their feet cheering and yelling. Within the space of a couple of hours, the future of the cinema had been irrevocably transformed.

—George Morris

THE JAZZ SINGER:
Debunking a few myths

Most books on film history repeat the myth that *The Jazz Singer* saved Warner Bros. from bankruptcy. In an article published in *Screen* (Spring 1976) J. Douglas Gomery has shown that far from being in financial straits, Warner Bros. was in the midst of a massive expansion in 1927 of which the move into sound represented only a small portion (about 20%) of their capital investments. Though this rapid expansion caused a large operating loss in 1926, the company had already begun to show a profit in 1927, even before *The Jazz Singer* was released.

Warner Bros.' advertising for *The Jazz Singer* suggests that the company did not consider the sound aspect of the film to be nearly as important as the signing of Jolson to play the lead. *The Jazz Singer* was treated as a major release ("Warner Bros. Supreme Triumph"), but advertised much more as a Jolson film than as a sound film. For example the program for *The Jazz Singer* included in the recently published *Souvenir Programs of Twelve Classic Movies 1927-1941* (ed. Miles Kreuger, Dover Publications) pictures or mentions Jolson on literally every one of its 20 pages, whereas Vitaphone or sound is mentioned on only four pages.

A recent viewing of the film left me feeling that Warner Bros.' publicity department was right to place the emphasis where it did: Jolson's performance is all that makes the film more than a historical curiosity. Jolson was the Mick Jagger of his time, not only in terms of popularity but in terms of vitality and sexuality. (The Al Jolson of 1927 would have had the same trouble on the Ed Sullivan show as the Elvis Presley of 1957; he would have been photographed from the waist up—from the waist down he never stops moving.)

I'm tempted to speculate that without Jolson *The Jazz Singer* would not have been a success, and sound films might not have swept the world. Perhaps if George Jessel had accepted the Warner Bros. offer, we'd still be making silent films.

—Joe Medjuck

THE REGULARS

SPEAKING INDEPENDENTLY

Amalie R. Rothschild

FILMMAKERS UNITE: THE AIVF

Those of us involved with independent filmmaking share a responsibility toward the community at large. I sincerely hope this column will fulfill a portion of that responsibility, dispensing information vital to artists actively engaged in film and video production, as well as the potential independent filmmaker.

In future columns I shall discuss such problems as 16mm distribution (a very personal concern of mine), methods of approaching sources for grants, processes of structuring proposals for grants, and other topics related to the infinite number of obstacles besetting independent film production. I'm not promising any easy solutions to these problems (there are none), but perhaps by discussing them, understanding them, and sharing some knowledge accumulated over the past few years, I can help prevent the duplication of energies and its counterproductive waste of time and money that prevailed before the formation of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers in January, 1974.

As one of its founding members, I have strong emotional and professional ties to the AIVF. In the three years since its inception, it has become the single most important source of unification within the independent community. Prior to its establishment, all of us were floundering in a vacuum, working in isolated little pockets in which the struggle to survive often sapped our creative energies. Unaware of one another's problems, we frequently repeated mistakes for which our colleagues had already found solutions.

Realizing the dispiriting effect of such isolation and sensing the need for a common meeting ground to share information, John Culkin, head of the Center for Understanding Media, asked Ed Lynch in 1973 to lay preliminary groundwork for the first trade association for independent film and video artists. (It's important to remember that AIVF is a *trade* association, not a union). During a six-to-eight month period, Lynch talked with various people in the field, sharing the fruits of his exploratory labor in a formal meeting held on January 31, 1974, in New York City. 125 people showed up for that initial meeting, making it immediately apparent that not only was there a need for such an organization, but enormous interest as well. We incorporated ourselves in July, 1974, and by November of that year, the original number of 125 charter members had doubled.

Ed Lynch, its chief organizer from the beginning, served as President of the AIVF for three years. The original Board of Directors consisted of Lynch, Martha Coolidge, Ed Emshwiller, Phillip Messina, Bob Bordiga, Marc Weiss and myself. In subsequent years we have been joined and supplemented by Ted Churchill, Maxi Cohen, Charles Levine, Larry Loewinger, Alan Miller, Kitty Morgan, Jane Morrison, Matt Clarke and Ting Barrow (who is the current President).

If the Board tends to reflect a broad cross-section of different disciplines within the field, it is because the AIVF does not represent any one genre or approach to filmmaking. There are no cliques among us. The concerns of the AIVF emanate directly from the interests of its members. Occasionally there are grumbles, but the spirit of the organization is one of community. No faction, no specialized area among us is ignored. All it takes is for interested individuals to arise and take the initiative to share with, and present to, the rest of us, their concerns in the field.

There are no cliques among us. The concerns of the AIVF emanate directly from the interests of its members.

Awareness of individual problems is achieved through the presentations given to the community at large in our weekly Wednesday night meetings. These presentations assume various forms: screenings of new works, technical workshops, panels covering different areas of film production and distribution, open dialogues that enrich the community's mutual perception of specialized problems. These presentations have embraced such diverse topics as the quality of lab stock, the American Film Institute's grant programs, a panel during which certain influential New York film critics were grilled for their lack of independent film coverage, appearances by public television officials outlining their policies, and representatives from the various craft unions within the motion picture industry.

The lines of communication that have been established with the craft unions in New York City have persuaded the unions' leaders to acknowledge for the first time that there are a substantial number of artists making movies for reasons beyond commerce and profit. As a result of an AIVF committee's work, new financial realities are being constructed. NABET, for example, has come up with new modified rates for documentary production, and work is now being done on formulating alternate guidelines that would apply to grant-funded films. Our Cable Access Committee helped save Channel 31 in New York; recently, extensive lobbying was done in Washington D.C. on the FCC regulations; and Ed Lynch, myself, and several other members spent much of January, 1976, lobbying against certain provisions of the new copyright law that would have been fundamentally disastrous to non-theatrical distribution as we now know it.

We are also responsible for running two highly successful weekly workshops, one on directing, and the other on screenwriting. And we have published *Doing It Yourself*, a handbook on independent film distribution based on the experiences of New Day Films, and written by Julia Reichert.

An extraordinary amount of positive energy has emerged from our collective labors during AIVF's still-brief life. We publish a monthly newsletter, equivalent organizations have developed in Boston and on the West Coast, and we now maintain a paid office staff of three in New York [at 99 Prince Street, NYC 10012]. We have spawned one other important organization (which will be the subject of another column)—Independent Cinema Artists and Producers (ICAP), which negotiates pay cable licensing rights, returning 75% of the revenues to the filmmakers. And our International Festivals' Committee is headed by Marc Weiss, who has virtually singlehandedly persuaded European film festivals to use AIVF as a consolidation center for their selection processes for American films. This relieves the filmmaker of the responsibility of paying shipping and freight charges, and eliminates many of the risks involved in sending films abroad.

Solidarity has been the secret of AIVF's growth and survival. We have provided an

atmosphere in which individual filmmakers can find community support; for example, our public presentation on First Amendment rights was an important factor in blocking Rockefeller University's efforts to thwart the release of Julia Reichert and Jim Klein's *Methadone: An American Way of Dealing*, and the Justice Department's threat to confiscate Emile de Antonio's *Underground*. The fight has really just begun, but if we continue to consolidate, exchange ideas and information, and form mutually supportive professional *and* social relationships, I feel there is virtually no limit to what we can accomplish for both ourselves and one another. Our strength in numbers has enabled us to bolster our influence, mobilizing the tools of power to work for, rather than against, us. Our membership, which currently numbers over 500 in the United States and Canada, has made its presence felt within the industry at large, firmly establishing the Association of Independent and Video Filmmakers as one of the most vital, important concepts to emerge in the independent film field.

Amalie R. Rothschild is an independent filmmaker and a founding member of New Day Films, the distribution cooperative. Her films include Woo Who? May Wilson, It Happens to Us, *and* Nana, Mom and Me.

PARIS LETTER

Geoffrey Minish

LES FILMS SEXY

The actress who symbolises the French cinema of the Seventies, as Brigitte Bardot did in the Fifties and Jeanne Moreau in the Sixties, is Sylvia Kristel. *Emmanuelle* has made more money internationally than any other French film, and in Paris, where it is still running, has sold nearly two-and-a-half million tickets. Personally, I haven't seen it, although I caught its sequel, *Emmanuelle II*, in Stockholm last year. I did so mainly because *Emmanuelle II* has been "banned" in France, i.e., received the censor's X-rating, which restricts it to the 160-odd theatres in the pornographic circuit. The producer objected and withheld the film from French release. You can't blame him: *Emmanuelle II*, at least in the version I saw, is pretty anodyne, and by the standards of its genre, an expensive production. Why should it be denied the access granted its predecessor to the more than 4,200 theatres in the French "family" circuit?

The answer, obviously, is that things have changed in France since 1974, when *Emmanuelle* was released. Censorship had been relaxed to what seemed the point of non-existence, and *films sexy*, as they were called, accounted that year for about 14 per cent of national ticket sales. In 1968 the figure had been 4 per cent.

At first, this shift in moviegoing habits didn't cause the government too much concern. France, the official line went, was heading for a Swedish-style *société libérale*. But in 1975 the first American hard-core hit the French screens, and the French industry riposted with Jean-François Davy's *Exhibition*. All this made good sensational press copy, and triggered outcries from the various groups devoted to preserving the sanctity of the French family. France may be Gay Paree, but it is also a country where any woman who can produce a dozen children in wedlock receives a medal from the state. The government suddenly remembered that Swedes don't have a vote in France, but rural Catholics do, and the result was draconic legislation to stem the rising tide of iniquity.

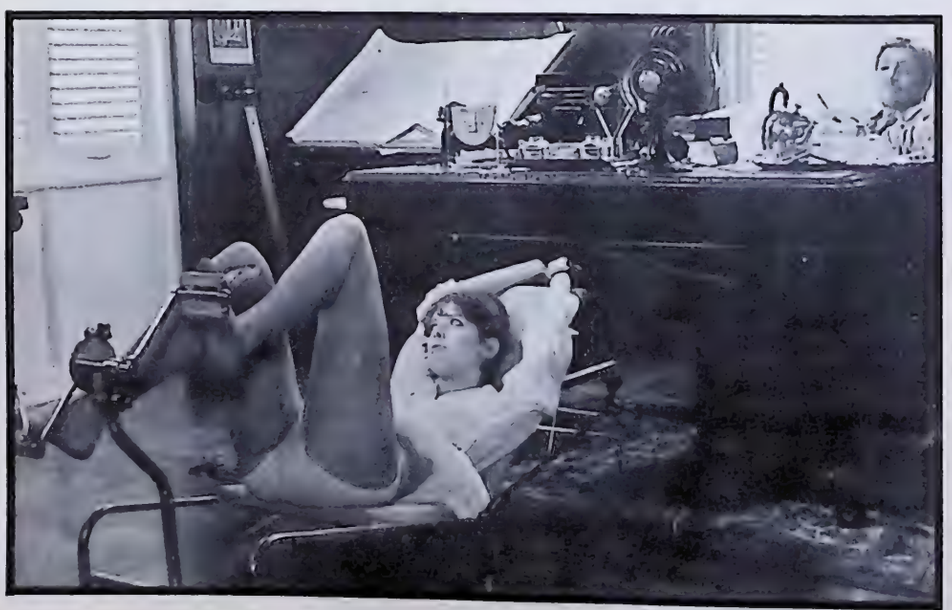
Apart from banning pornographic films from the mass circuit and forcing them into their own equivalent of the art-house ghetto, the new regulations restricted advertising (no photos) and imposed a twenty percent profits tax. There was also a 300,000-franc [$60,000] tax for any distributor who imported pornography from abroad. This more or less killed the foreign market, by making exchange deals unprofitable for French distributors, while at the same time stimulating local production to the extent that eighty-five percent of pornographic films shown in France these days is French-made. The legislation nonetheless succeeded in reducing the size of the audience for pornography to about five percent of the moviegoing public.

I am indebted for these facts to the trade weekly *Film Français*, which this summer devoted a special issue to the French porn industry. There is a widespread belief that making a porn flick is an easy way to get rich, but *Film Français* questions this.

"Take," it says, "a film costing between 150,000 and 200,000 francs [between $30,000 and $40,000] and chalking up 127,000 entries in Paris and 110,000 in the provinces (or a total of 237,000 entries, which is a good score). It will bring in, including VAT (added-value tax), 733,000 francs [$148,125] in distributor's receipts. Deducting VAT, the producer and distributor share about 515,000 francs [$103,000]. In the event of the distributor's commission being forty percent, the producer pockets 300,000 francs [$60,000]. The twenty percent profits tax must be deducted from that amount. On top of everything else, the returns are sluggish."

Yet there has been no slowdown in production, as in the crisis-ridden "straight" sector. (In the early Fifties, about one and a half percent of French films remained unreleased. Unofficial estimates put the 1977 figure at ten percent.) At present, approximately one in every three films produced in France is pornographic. That's why Sylvia Kristel is a symbol of the porno boom, qualified by the fact that she is the soft-core queen, and what the French

Umberto Orsini watches Sylvia Kristel melt those pounds away, in Emmanuelle.



are into now is hard core. Kristel, moreoever, is not dependent on the genre, and has therefore been able to avoid the career problems which the advent of hard core has posed for lesser-known actresses—*pudeur* in this domain being a big liability, like a squeaky voice when talkies came in.

Elsewhere in the issue there is an interview with *Exhibition* star Claudine Beccarie, who discusses the hunger strike she undertook early this summer. Two years ago, she explains, when she got married, she decided to give up hard core. In January 1976 she starred, soft-core, in an Italian film which opened in a Latin Quarter cinema this year under the title *Carine: Inhibition*.

"As I was counting on it very much," says Miss Beccarie, "to show people that I can act, I took 1,800 francs [$360] worth of advertising in the entertainment guide *Pariscop* to announce that I would auto-

You could easily see it wasn't her — "the girl had a pink bottom, mine is suntanned."

graph photos after the screenings."

But what she didn't know was that after the film had been passed by the French censor, three hard-core inserts had been added. You could easily see it wasn't her—"the girl had a pink bottom, mine is suntanned."

The *Film Français* issue also includes interviews with two porn directors, Frédéric Lansac and Norbert Terry, both of whom plead poverty. Since the X certificate came in, Lansac complains, expenses have been cut to the minimum.

"Up to recently," he says, "because of foreign sales, you could make films costing 500,000 [$100,000]. You tried for good-quality photography, a few exteriors, original ideas, and you didn't always have the same actresses. That's no longer possible."

"Perhaps the best thing would be to go back to soft core. One might find better stories, have better actors, pretty girls from casting agencies, and so on. You can't ask people to perform hard core and at the same time be able to act. And when you're shooting twenty minutes of screen time daily, how can the cameraman be expected to give the women decent lighting?"

Geoffrey Minish is a Canadian journalist working for Agence France Presse. He is our Paris correspondent.

DISH NIGHT
Waldo Lydecker

THE CORE OF THE BIG APPLE

THE GIRL WITH THE $25 TOP: John Simon's favorite pin-up, Liza Minnelli finally blew into the Big Town with her shaky show "The Act," and was greeted by a celebrity-filled audience (including Elizabeth Taylor), all of whom were kept busy buzzing about whether or not Mrs. That's Entertainment was doing any lip-synching for her songs. The show's on-again off-again director Marty Scorsese showed up *not* singing "If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere" about his home town; Marge Champion's ex, Gower, was brought in to punch up the show at the next-to-the-last minute, and snipped the scene in which Liza fells co-star Barry Nelson with a series of karate chops. The offstage publicity about a romance between Star and Director achieved such monumental proportions the week of the opening that Jack Haley was forced to appear on Stanley Siegel's TV show to squash them.

SO MANY WORDS: Latest ungrateful Hollywood child to dish her parents in print will be Joan Crawford's adopted daughter Christina, who has penned her autobiography for Morrow. She joins the ranks which include Brooke Hayward, who has already done a job on her folks and is now going to town on ex-husband Dennis Hopper in her sequel to *Haywire*, and Jill Schary Robinson, who has just turned in her fictionalized version of growing-up-in-Tinseltown, *Perdido*, to Knopf.

THE BIG QUESTION MARK: The not-so-well guarded secret screenings of Bertolucci's *1900* at the NYFF were attended by, among others, Jackie Onassis, who was overheard asking Pete Hamill which ones were the Fascists, and Lillian Hellman, who walked out at the end of the first half. Lily was still smarting over the interview Jane Fonda gave in which she called the writer she plays in *Julia* "not a beautiful woman," and from the run-in she had with a member of the audience at a screening of the Fonda film who told Ms. Hellman that she preferred the book version, "Pimiento".

GOING LEGIT: Wim Wenders' ex-wife Ingrid Caven will trod the boards in Paris later this season in an haute couture revival of Jean Cocteau's *L'Aigle à deux têtes,* to be produced by Yves St. Laurent. In America, the play will be remembered as the vehicle from which Tallulah Bankhead had upstart young supporting player Marlon Brando fired while on the road.

CINQUANTE-QUATRE: A few weeks before he announced his retirement from the concert stage, Elton John threw himself a bash at Manhattan's hottest discothèque, Studio 54, to celebrate the publication of a book of his and Bernie Taupin's lyrics. 54 is the place Christina Onassis goes to duck Jackie, and it was an odd coincidence that Jackie's ex-employer Viking Press is the publisher of the John book. Jackie did not show, but neither did Christina, for that matter. The entire cast of "Saturday Night Live" did, however, and joined the revelers, some of whom were chugging Moët out of bottles. A few weeks later, the nightspot was the scene of the much-publicized party for the *Eyes* crew, for which Barbra Streisand flew in from the coast to find out what was going on between producer Jon Peters and star Faye Dunaway. We never found out the answer to that one, but Barbra did stay around for the remainder of the filming, telling everyone that she was in town for the cabaret opening of her sister, Rosalyn Kind, to whom she hasn't spoken in years.

WALDO'S PICK-OF-THE-MONTH: Although it is the policy of this column to report the facts and not to editorialize, I feel it is my duty to break form and recommend a new flick which I think everyone should catch. It is ancient rascal Luis Bunuel's latest, *That Obscure Object of Desire*, and it's a real crowd-pleaser. It's a remake of the Von Sternberg oldie *The Devil is a Woman*, the picture in which Marlene Dietrich first sang those immortal words, "If It Isn't Pain, Then It Isn't Love," and since Bunuel couldn't come up with another Dietrich, he graciously provides us with no less than two actresses playing Marlene's old role. Heart-throb Fernando Rey is as dashing as ever (he looks like a tall Ted Ashley in this one), and fans of elegance will appreciate the sophisticated hi-jinks, like Rey's beloved dumping a pail of water over his head, and a fly drowning in a martini glass. This pic is for anyone who gets turned on by aging Jockey Club roués and who doesn't have the time to see *The Devil is a Woman* in the backroom of a leather bar — and isn't that just about everybody?

FLAMINGO HOURS
Gene Youngblood

SHAME AND EXALTATION

In her new film *Beyond Good and Evil*, Liliana Cavani has used the last years of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche as the starting point for a non-biographical, fictionalized portrait of three unconventional people attempting to live together in sexual and spiritual freedom in the repressive society of late 18th century Germany.

At 38, dying of syphilis, his philosophical works as yet unrecognized, Nietzsche (Erland Josephson) meets Lou, a 21-year-old Russian Jewess (Dominique Sanda) who seems to be achieving the personal liberty in which he believes but has not attained. Both Nietzsche and his young protegé Paul (Robert Powell) fall in love with Lou's rebellious free spirit. The three begin living together, but their experiment is doomed by Paul's obsessive jealousy and by Nietzsche's decline into syphilitic madness. In the end Paul, having accepted his repressed homosexuality, is raped and killed by a gang of German workers. Lou is left alone, a symbol of the enduring spirit of youth and the hope of a New Age.

In many ways the film is an embarrassment. Aspiring to profundity, it frequently achieves only pretentiousness. By most standards of good taste and intelligence it is grotesque, ludicrous and somewhat naïve. The fault is the script, which advances some of the silliest dialogue and most preposterous premises ever conceived with a (presumably) straight face. Stylistically derivative, the film is characterized by a kind of flamboyant, surrealistic decadence mostly reminiscent of Ken Russell; it is taken here to such outrageous extremes as to make Russell seem positively Bressonian, but that doesn't prevent the self-conscious posturings from being, like Russell's, unintentionally hilarious.

We see the enfeebled Nietzsche smoking opium in his byzantine Venice palazzo midst stuffed peacocks and Wagnerian choruses, receiving casual blowjobs from jaded Countesses while he hallucinates the Devil and Christ in a nude homoerotic ballet. Lou, meanwhile, enjoys public pissing while her various suitors are given to wrist-slashing and hara-kiri over her liberated lifestyle. And the scenes designed to reveal Paul's homosexuality are hard-core explicit, in tableaux similar to Hans-Jurgen Syberberg's *Ludwig: Requiem For A Virgin King* with a touch of Fellini's *Satyricon*.

No doubt *Beyond Good and Evil* will be ignored by most cultured folks as lightweight stuff unworthy of serious attention, if it's not condemned outright as perverted sensationalism. I can understand both responses, yet I like this movie very much. I think it's a work of integrity and high morality. In spite of its quasi-decadent posturings I came away with an exalted sense of human decency, dignity and potential. In spite of its aesthetic debts to other films, it reaffirmed my admiration for the art of cinema.

I thought about this film for a long time after I saw it. I thought about the acting. Erland Josephson is absolutely terrific, considering the atrocious script he had to overcome and the mastery with which he does indeed transcend it, projecting a keen assurance and perception of the role that supplies an emotional depth the script lacks. And Dominique Sanda is enormously enchanting as the avant-garde feminist adventurer—strong, dominating, with a compassionate intelligence. I thought about the style of the film: neither as lurid as Ken Russell nor as grotesque as recent Fellini, with the strongest elements of both. *Beyond Good and Evil* is a spectacularly beautiful movie, easily comparable to the visual surfaces of Bertolucci, Wertmüller, Syberberg, Russell and Fellini.

Dominique Sanda generates more erotic energy by peeing in a spittoon than Diane Keaton does in all of her foul repertoire as a sexual Barbie Doll cruising the Crisco Discos.

Mainly, though, I thought about the *idea* of the film, its explicit attempt to stand as a model of human behavior against a background of social hypocrisy and repression. It is intrinsically ethical in its effort to humanize life concepts, depicting the struggles of three people who want to live beyond accepted norms in order to achieve liberty and dignity. Everything that happens in this movie, no matter how apparently sensational, is done with a sense of moral and ethical commitment to humanistic values. These people know, as Bob Dylan knows, that you have to live outside the law to be honest, and they do it with enviable grace and energy, without a trace of lasciviousness.

On the other hand, the shallow figures of Richard Brooks' *Looking For Mr. Goodbar* move through their self-made purgatory without any social or personal awareness at all. For them, ethics and morality don't exist. For this reason alone *Goodbar* strikes me as a filthy, dirty movie, utterly reprehensible, totally corrupt in every respect, completely devoid of redeeming value. It cultivates the meanest notions about human nature, debases sex, depoliticizes conscience, and shamelessly exploits its media-event status with sensational narrative gimmicks that have no possible justification other than mindless titillation on the amusement-park level of *Jaws*. Yet this movie is being called "important," "meaningful," and "serious." It is said to have "integrity." It is described as "erotic."

Well, I may be old-fashioned, but it seems to me that the whole sordid affair is about as far from erotic as you can get. No one in this movie has any fun fucking, at least not in any sense I'm capable of understanding. Dominique Sanda generates more erotic energy by peeing in a spittoon than Diane Keaton does in all of her foul repertoire as a sexual Barbie Doll cruising the Crisco Discos. Eroticism is the ultimate embrace of life and of human potential, the affirmation of hope and generosity—all qualities conspicuously absent from this film but abundant in Liliana Cavani's picture.

The audience broke into applause at the end of *Goodbar* the night I saw it. Keaton had just been disembowelled in the Terminal Fuck and the audience was applauding. I was profoundly jolted by this emotional non-sequitur. I was shocked. I was sick. I stayed in my seat till the auditorium was almost empty, trying to understand what I'd experienced. And what I'd experienced was shame. I was overwhelmed with shame. Now, shame isn't about guilt. Guilt is dishonest anger. Guilt is anger that's turned in on oneself for fear of offending a world that disapproves (rightly or wrongly) of one's actions. Guilt is avoidance of responsibility, and it is therefore inherently non-ethical. Shame, on the other hand, as a sense of dishonor or disgrace associated with a sense of responsibility, is inherently ethical. So what I was experiencing at *Goodbar* was a sense of ignominy at the abandonment of ethical responsibility by the makers of this disgraceful movie, and at the complicity of the audience in this shameful act of collective ethical avoidance.

The common apology for such films is

Coming up in the March issue of

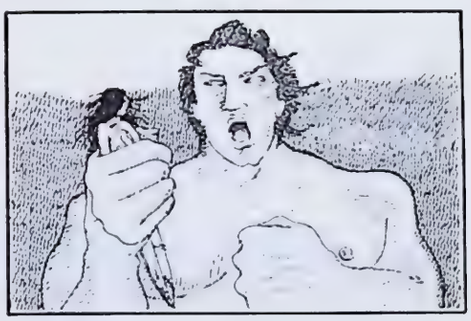
TAKE ONE

An OUTRAGEOUS interview

Director Richard Benner talks to Jan Dawson about the politics of filmmaking in Canada and about how a film like *Outrageous*, which knocks Toronto the Good, ever got made.

Me Tarzan, You Junk

Bruce Kawin discovers a new genre—the Paranoia Film—inhabited by the One Right Man, the Treacherous Woman, and Them. According to Kawin, the violence in these films "can *make* people violent, teach them violence."



The trash of '77?

Desperate Living may be the best American film of 1977. In a talk with director John Waters, George Morris discusses the midnight phenomenon of *Pink Flamingos*, examines Waters' other films, and takes a look at an emerging "trash" aesthetic.

And much, much, more!

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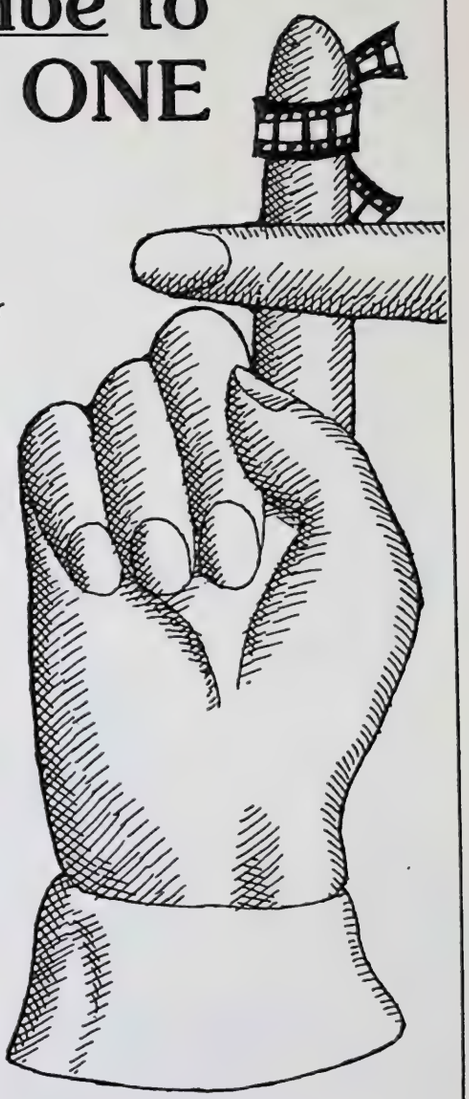

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that they "make us think." The notion is implicit that their authors are principled humanists, ethical watchdogs alerting us to dangers within, warning us when we've strayed from the path of righteousness. A movie like *Goodbar* is seen as a metaphor for contemporary American society: a mirror that challenges us to confront, if we dare, the twisted visage and empty eyes that stare back. So it "makes us think." But think about what? We know how to be depressed. We know how to fail. The mass culture is populous with models of human failure, but where are its maps of success and of joy? The fact is that we can think only about what is given. We cannot cultivate that which isn't available. We don't order a dish that isn't on the menu. We don't vote for a candidate who isn't on the ballot. We rarely select what's scarcely available, seldom emphasized, infrequently presented. We participate only in what's easily and repeatedly available.

I submit that the purveyors of movies like *Goodbar* aren't calling for moral and ethical reform at all, even if they themselves may be so piteously deluded as to believe it (which no doubt they do). No, the popularity of such films is not a sign of moral outrage by an ethically-motivated and politically aware population; rather, it's a symptom of the spirit of defeat and fatigue that characterizes the times in which we live. If today's mass-media "artists" are the men and women of the hour it's because they stand for it, because they embody the very failure of ethical responsibility they purport to deplore. They speak to the decadence of our times by imitating it, by becoming examples of it. They actually validate the very phenomena they would have us challenge—not because they approve of what they describe but because they submit to it.

Dissent arises from the juxtaposition of opposing models, but in today's mass audience "art" there's no suggestion of an alternative, there's only complaint. Increasingly, art has become almost exclusively the expression of moral discomfort, unhappiness, incomprehension. Today, an artist is considered more or less important according to whether he or she complains more or complains less, and despair has become one of the fundamental requirements of "great" art. But surely great art is as inspiring as it is terrifying; it reaches for the possibilities of life and, in falling short, still affirms them. But our "art" has become increasingly infantile and corrupt: no longer does it express faith in the individual, a positive attitude toward our ability to know and to will. No longer does art exalt human nature and progress: it just denounces without indicating an alternative.

Surely there's nothing so noble as the human mind, which alone is capable of conceiving nobility. But the cultural environment out of which our dominant conceptual systems spring is the work of perceptual imperialists whose science is despair, who publish doubt and call it knowledge, who are always questioning but never capable of answering. Industrial civilization teeters on the brink of a moral and ethical demise that only a complete revolution of consciousness can prevent, yet the very source of our consciousness must resist the transformation, must deny the contingencies which it has itself created. We are bound by the will of perceptual imperialists who practice a science of illusions, who spread the fever of doubtful news and establish thereby a mood so fixed it has become a manner of the mind. We are seriously enfeebled by this fixation upon self-disgust. That's why I choose to champion a silly film like *Beyond Good and Evil*, which at least exalts human potential, rather than endorsing an important film like *Goodbar*, which strikes me as the end of civilization, the eclipse of all values, and the absence of shame.

Gene Youngblood is the author of Expanded Cinema. *His new book,* The Videosphere, *will be published in 1978 by E.P. Dutton & Co.*

WOMEN IN FILM
Kay Armatage

WHY *NOT* HOLLYWOOD?

Kay Armatage's column is a continuation of her examination of feminist film criticism, begun in the November issue of Take One. *The next segment will appear in our March issue.*

Marguerite Duras is very well respected in feminist film circles, and well she should be. Her films are aggressively spare, minimal, controlled, and complex, made with a rigorously intellectual aesthetic, with multiple layers of narrative, precise and enigmatic sight and sound, the connections of which are metaphorical rather than direct. All of Duras films have deserved the unqualified respect with which critics—feminists and men too—have responded to them. And in this climate, it is gratifying that such respect has come without any irritable reaching after fact and reason, without questions of class struggle, positive role models, or alternative distribution.

For these have become the central issues in North American feminist criticism. There's another question which takes shape in the lacuna between the aggressively negative (and feminist) response to *Femmes au soleil* and the admiration (also feminist) for films by Duras, Chantal Ackerman, Jackie Raynal, and others. The issue appears as the distinction between Art and Commerce. The ostensible complaint again *Femmes au soleil* was that it is bourgeois and reactionary in its depiction of women's lives and concerns, but the deeper truth seemed to lie in its surface gloss, which pegged it clearly as a bid for a commercial audience, to follow in the footsteps of *Elvira Madigan, Le Bonheur,* and *Cousin Cousine.* My deeply feminist response to such an attempt is Why Not? But this is not the party line, as will be revealed...

The present climate of feminist film criticism has been dominated by a point of view which I regard as fundamentally American. Although no manifesto of feminist film criticism has been published, a parallel document of literature makes my point. *Feminist Literary Criticism* (ed. Josephine Donovan) suggests five criteria for judging literature: the work should 1) present positive and realistic role models for women; 2) assist in consciousness raising; 3) promote an androgynous society; 4) promote sisterhood among women; and 5) be realistic and authentic. What I take to be American about this critical approach, I also regard as incorrect. To wit: it is 1) culturally chauvinistic (who defines 'positive role models' and for whom? likewise for realism and authenticity); 2) individualistic (valuing the personal revelation of consciousness-raising rather than analysis of the institutional bases of oppression); 3) liberal (at what levels of society is androgyny a realistic goal?); and 4) materialistic (and by that I don't mean the dialectical or historical kind, but the everlasting tendency to look only at the matter, the content, rather than to analyze the structures of the work as they reflect, support, subvert, or—in my wildest dreams—overthrow the oppressive structures of institutions and of language).

But back to film criticism. In the discussions I've heard, what I've outlined above regarding literary criticism seems basically the gist of what many feminists want for film criticism. This was particularly

true at the Toronto Festival of Festivals Womanscene, where the best serious discussion went on. Feminist film criticism was formulated on those bases: positive role models, realism and authenticity, sisterhood (one prominent woman said that she didn't like any film that, if shown to a group of garden variety women, would upset, confuse, or polarize their views!), and consciousness-raising (hence—I take it—the enthusiasm for *The Double Day* and the many self-help films vs. the lackluster response to Yvonne Rainer's brilliant *Christina Talking Pictures*).

There was one additional criterion in these discussions: alternative, i.e. cooperative, distribution. Now this is an important point: it deserves consideration and is not out of place in a discussion of feminist film criticism. Women filmmakers have been hindered by the fact that as often as not they are making films for purposes other than entertainment (such as consciousness-raising, retrieving our history and culture, and generating political activity—all good criteria; don't get me wrong). Thus the normal commercial distribution systems are neither accessible to women nor would they do them any good anyway. New markets are growing, and new forms of distribution are arising to tap them. This will affect the variety, quality, and subject matter—and hence the aesthetics—of the films that will be made by women. So distribution becomes a critical question, but should it be a critical criterion?

That question became a substantial discussion at one Womanscene forum when several panelists very pleasantly locked horns. Julia Reichert (New Day Films, *Growing Up Female, Union Maids*), Julia Lesage (*Jump Cut*) and Martha Coolidge (*Not a Pretty Picture*) were the main participants. Reichert and Lesage maintained that there were certain kinds of films that needed to be made and should be made by women, and that these films could only be distributed by an alternative system. The implication was that this is the feminist film activity. Coolidge argued that women should be making inroads into the industry however they could without giving up their feminism; if she could wangle her way into Hollywood by convincing the moneymen that an adventure film about strong women could be commercially successful, she would do it in a flash and was therefore working toward that end. (At last report, she has moved to L.A. and is talking Hollywood deals).

Coolidge's film, *Not a Pretty Picture*, had been pretty well received, though it has been criticized for not being hard enough on the men. I think it was finally a disappointment to many in the New York Festival of Women's Films audience; I'm judging now by the response of the woman behind me, who was so active and vociferous in her relation with the screen that she became a one-woman sensurround for me. The film's subject is rape of the particularly insidious sort: teenage peer pressure and seductive coersion by a guy the film's central woman character sort of liked. It's the filmmaker's recreation of her adolescent trauma, filtered through an actor who contributed her own memories of a similar experience. What with filming rehearsals of the scenes, final versions of some scenes, discussions between actors and director about their own lives and the parts they're playing, it all gets pretty removed from the horrifying memory that most of us have of that episode in our lives. That distancing is effective and purposeful. The film manages to give tarnished old *cinéma vérité* the lustre of truth, and by a nifty loop-the-loop, focusses our attention dramatically on the personal experience of the director at the climax, by simply panning from the rape being enacted on the set to Coolidge's silent, shaky, horrified, fascinated response.

Lina Wertmüller, surely the most visible woman director in the world today, simply wasn't mentioned.

Drawing by Montreal artist Donna Louthood.

Not a Pretty Picture manages to present all the feelings and insights, without prissiness, exploitation or titillation. That seems to me the main accomplishment of the film, but that may also have been the disappointment for the woman behind me. She started off very enthusiastically, writhing and jumping around in her seat, cringing and groaning as those fifties adolescent scenes were revisited, and shouting out 'stupid pig' whenever the men appeared on the screen. But she gradually got quieter and her moans seemed disappointed, because the men weren't stupid pigs: not violent, hateful, grotesque, or villainous. One of them was just a shnook, and the rapist was just a jerk. He might have been a nice guy if he'd understood anything at all, but the character himself and the actor playing him were both jerks. And Coolidge lets her actor talk on, improvising, lets him be liberal and uncomprehending and personally revealing; she doesn't edit him or cut away to counterpoint images, doesn't exploit him to make points. The film seems fair, human, and smart to me; it deals with a subject which is important, since it affects nearly all women, and provides instruction about the way a non-exploitative, unsensational film can be made. Certainly a woman's point of view, and a perfect comparative study with films on the same subject by men.

But how will her next film fare if it crosses that ugly commercial line? For here is where the question of distribution becomes proscriptive. If alternative distribution is a critical criterion—and it's clear that only certain kinds of film are suitable for or desirous of that sort of distribution—we effectively eliminate commercial cinema for women filmmakers. And sure enough, at none of the festivals this year did we see a frame of a 'popular' film, except for *Femmes au soleil*, doubly damned for its commercial slickness, or Jeanne Moreau's *Lumière*, if that counts as 'popular'. Lina Wertmüller, surely the most visible woman director in the world today, simply wasn't mentioned. Her recent films have been widely accessible, and another showing of *Swept Away* or *Seven Beauties* would have been redundant, but I would have been interested in seeing *Lizards* (1963), her first feature. And I certainly would have liked to see Nelly Kaplan's new film, *Nea ou la lettre à Emannuelle*. It wasn't finished for Cannes, but it might have been available for Toronto's festival. The only time I brought it up, it was dismissed as a porno film and a failed bid for a general audience. Virginia Stone's crummy *Evil in the Deep* was shown in the Cannes Marché, but I didn't see any of the women who were organizing for women's Cannes rights at the screening. They didn't miss much, to be sure, but why was no one interested? And Liliana Cavani (*The Night Porter*) and Stephanie Rothman (*Student Nurses, Velvet Vampire, Groupe Marriage, Terminal Island*) are clearly beyond the pale. I remember when the 1973 Toronto Women & Film Festival premiered Rothman's *Terminal Island* on a midnight bill with *Bury Me an Angel* by Barbara Peeters: both films were greeted with horrified denials of their right to be included in a women's film festival.

Kay Armatage is a Toronto teacher, writer and filmmaker. She is the co-director of Jill Johnston: October 1975.

FROM THE FESTIVALS
Joe Medjuck

EDINBURGH: 1977

The aims and policies of the Edinburgh International Film Festival are often exemplified by its selection of Canadian films. This was perhaps most true in 1975 when Michel Brault's *Les Ordres*, Michael Snow's *Rameau's Nephew* and David Cronenberg's *Shivers* (then still called *The Parasite Murders*) were shown. *Les Ordres* was invited to a lot of festivals that year, but how many film festivals would dare schedule a five-hour Michael Snow film or a cheaply-made exploitation movie? Each of the three films represents an area that Edinburgh has staked out for itself: politics, the avant-garde and "commercial" films by young directors on the fringe of the industry.

Festival director Lynda Myles's credo is that the context in which the films are shown is as important as the films themselves, and in the context of Edinburgh it makes more sense to show films by Snow and Cronenberg than the standard film festival fare of Fellini, Bergman or Truffaut. After all, the latter filmmakers' work is probably going to show up at your local neighbourhood art house and be discussed at length in various publications. Edinburgh serves a much greater service by showing films which don't usually receive attention elsewhere and which are often of more intrinsic interest than the more conventional festival choices.

For the past three years the Edinburgh context has been largely defined by week-long conferences (or "Events" as they choose to call them) involving lectures, group discussions and, of course, screenings. The festival now publishes a magazine of background readings for each season's Event, and most people contributing to the magazine, as well as those giving papers or leading discussion groups, have been associated with the British magazine *Screen*. Though the organizers of the Event like to describe it as an "intervention in British film culture," it seems to me to be a major force in not just British film culture but the film culture of the English-speaking world.

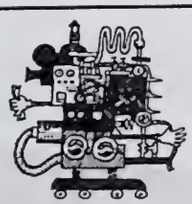
This year, the Event, organized by Claire Johnston, was entitled "History / Production / Memory," and films screened in conjunction with it included various British independent films from the thirties, two Ealing films from the forties, René Allio's *Mois, Pierre Rivière*, the Ken Loach-Tony Garnett-BBC TV series *Days of Hope* and six films by Dziga-Vertov! However, the scope of the Event was such that one's perception of virtually every film in the festival was altered by the ideas and concerns expressed at the conference. Not that you were left with much time to see films not scheduled as part of the Event: with the mornings taken up by papers and group discussions, the afternoons and evenings with screenings, there were days when you were kept busy from 10 am until 2 am.

While all this was going on there were, of course, films: more than 100 of them in two weeks. This year Canadians were once again well represented by screenings of Jean-Pierre Lefebvre's *Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort*, Dick Benner's *Outrageous* (one of the popular successes of the festival) and by David Cronenberg's *Rabid* (presented at a late night "gala" screening). For both Lefebvre and Cronenberg it was the fourth time that one of their films had been selected for Edinburgh. I'm tempted to point out that it's thus probably easier to see a Jean-Pierre Lefebvre film in Edinburgh than in Toronto. Cronenberg's films *are* widely seen in Canada, but they're even more commercially successful in Scotland; and though no one in Canada has ever treated them to the kind of serious analysis I think they deserve, in the UK Cronenberg is considered an important—if controversial—director. It was suggested to me that the reason for his popularity in Scotland has something to do with his equation of sex and death and the sexual repression of the Calvinist tradition. Whatever the reason, David Cronenberg is more of a name director in the UK than he is at home.

Concentrating as I have on the Canadian entries and the History / Production / Memory Event, I've ignored other important aspects of the 1977 Festival—not only individual films but retrospectives of work by Ulla Stockwell and Wim Wenders (including his shorts!) and a week-long television festival. I was able to attend only one lecture in the TV festival, and discovered that despite the high regard in which British TV is held on these shores, the response by representatives of the industry to speaker Raymond William's concise and lucid presentation suggested that most of them haven't seen a film or read a book for the last ten years.

The Edinburgh International Film Festival remains the best-programmed festival I know of. What problems there were this year stemmed from the festival's chronic lack of funding and from inadequate facilities. One can only wish the festival the best of luck in its plans to move Film House to a larger and better-equipped building.

Joe Medjuck teaches film at the University of Toronto and is Take One*'s Editorial Director.*



TECHNICAL NOTES
Bob Parent

TIME TO CATCH UP

Fifty years ago the first sound film was shown publicly after almost ten years of trying to break through the obtuseness of the industry moguls. (The technology was known for that long!) Within a very few years the silent film was history and the 'talkie' was in. In retrospect it might be considered significant that the optical soundtracks of these early 35mm theatrical films were capable of a frequency range similar to that of early LPs. In fact, direct optical recording produced the highest fidelity available until the advent of magnetic tape recording (in the '40s).

While the frequency range of 35mm soundtracks has been extended by less than an octave over the past 50 years, the *quality* of sound has improved tremendously with the greatest advancements being in microphone and speaker designs. So much so that as overall system quality approaches perfection, each new improvement becomes more subtle. Faced with the competition of stereo-quad recording and broadcasting, the industry has turned its attention towards the spatial use of sound in the theater—stereo, simulated stereo and source directionality. At least two optical multiple track formats (one five track, the

other six) that are also compatible with older mono projectors are competing heavily for the theatrical business. And the theaters, faced with TV competition, are quite receptive.

Although improvements in the theatrical formats have been overwhelming, 16mm has been at a near stand-still. The best contemporary track (magnetic) is still only slightly better than a 78rpm phono record, and the best projector made has a wow-and-flutter ratio equal to the average $150 home tape recorder. Obviously this format is in dire need of improvement and the breakthrough establishment of a digital system for film soundtracks.

What is digital recording?

Digital technology is essentially an encode-decode system that is just becoming practical as a result of advances in solid-state devices and circuitry.

In conventional technology, every link in the chain between original soundwave and the reproduced soundwave is a transfer of the original wave to another waveform *of identical shape* at every step (electrical waves, radio waves, record grooves, magnetic patterns on tape, edge contours of optical tracks, etc.) until re-transfer back to an acoustical soundwave. Most forms of interference or distortion also consist of waveforms which, at times, can be extremely difficult to separate from the signal waveform.

Digital systems differ in that the waveform reaching the receptor unit (encoder) is broken down into information bits which are analyzed and each assigned a code symbol (usually a numeral, hence the term digital) which is represented by a pulse combination. This series of pulse combinations is then either stored or transmitted. Obviously, a series of pulses is not affected by most of the forms of interference and distortion that plague conventional systems. When this digital information reaches the reproducer (decoder), each pulse combination tells the unit what bit of the waveform to *re-construct*. Ergo, a re-creation of the original sound wave.

The circuitry for the encoding and decoding is more elaborate than present systems design. But, now that we are in the age of transistors, FETs, ICs, chips and other assorted miniaturized solid-state devices, digital systems are just becoming a reality. At the Audio Engineering Society Convention and Exhibit this past November, a few production models were shown and several other manufacturers were openly talking about getting on the bandwagon shortly.

By now you are probably wondering how this new radio / recording technology relates to film. Well, present optical tracks—particularly small gauge formats—are highly prone to dirt, scratches and wow-and-flutter, all of which could be readily eliminated (or dramatically reduced) by a digital format. Nuff said? Other than "How soon?"

When one compares the number of 16mm projectors sold in a year with the total of hi-fi tape and phono systems, one can see that small-gauge film is at the bottom of the ladder. But super-8 and TV may come to the rescue. Super-8 is a mass-market item that could benefit from a hi-fi up-grading, and the TV industry is becoming aware of the competition from audio improvements.

Although improvements in the theatrical formats have been overwhelming, 16mm has been at a near stand-still. The best contemporary track is still only slightly better than a 78 rpm phono record.

FM is the carrier wave for TV audio transmission. It has the same capability for high fidelity stereo as its radio counterpart. There are already occasional stereo TV broadcasts on an experimental basis, and manufacturers will soon start marketing stereo TV sets. Then the networks will jump on the bandwagon and start programming in stereo. The producers will then have to think stereo, and the supporting film industry will have to work in stereo. The TV networks will feel the competition of five or six channels in theaters compared to their two, and then more dominoes will fall. But at the end of the line of dominoes is 16mm, and perhaps as much as five years away.

Along with the application of digital pulse encode-decode systems for film sound is the probability of the use of lasers. Laser beams can be focussed to very small diameters which should find application as a substitute for the exciter lamp in the recording and playback of optical tracks.

But it's not just sound-track technology that is in need of advancement. Refinements in the design of field equipment are also long overdue. Take microphones, for instance. There have been great strides in the improvement of frequency and directional response characteristics, but a really effective wind-proof mike is still below the horizon. New tape coating technology along with advances in solid-state circuitry, will make possible studio quality recording in portable cassette recorders—and with a sync track, too. (The Uher no. 210 is already on that threshhold.)

Further miniaturization of cassette recorders will eventually find some of the camera manufacturers combining a crystalized piggy-back camera / recorder that will produce top quality double system sync sound with the ease of present-day super-8 single system designs. And in stereo, too. When all this is combined with a helium-filled camera, documentary filmmakers will really be floating on 'cloud 9'.

Perhaps the first single-unit double-system outfit has been produced by Victor Duncan, Inc. Initially custom designed for a customer, they are now offering a modification of an Arriflex 16-SR with a Nagra SNN mounted on the side. All the function controls of the recorder operate from the camera trigger as well as automatic slating. Crystal sync is optional. The "Nagra Caddy," as it is called, can also be dismounted for 'wild sound' recording.

Sennheiser has introduced a few new products of interest to the film industry. The most elaborate is the "Sound Effect Vocoder no. VSM 201" which would be of most value to a mixing studio, as one of its main functions is the 'locking-on' to a voice in an already mixed track, and either modifying that voice or eliminating it so that another voice can be recorded in its place. The "White Noise Generator no. MZL 400" is useful for checking microphone performance and level adjustment in recording. Their Super Cardioid Dynamic microphone no. MD 402 LM has been available for a couple of years. However, a new version has been added. It is the MD 402 U and is a balanced-line version with XLR connectors instead of the permanently attached cable.

At the end of the previous column on audio equipment for filmmaking, U.S. and Canadian manufacturers or distributors were listed. Since then, names of more manufacturers or distributors have become available and are listed below after the addresses pertaining to equipment mentioned in the above column.

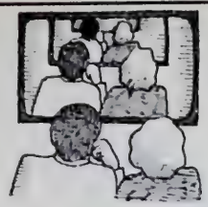
List of suppliers:

Agfa-Gevaert, 275 North St., Peterboro NJ 07608; Sennheiser Electronic Corp, 10 W. 37th St., New York, N.Y. 10018; Victor Duncan, Inc., 2659 Fondren, Dallas, TX 75206 and 200 E. Ontario, Chicago IL 60611 and 11043 Gratiot, Detroit, MI 48213; Cinelab, Inc., 421 W. 54th St., New York, N.Y. 10019

Additions to last month's list:

Ashley Audio, Inc., 1099 Jat St., Rochester, NY. 14611; Gerr Electro-Accoustics (Ashley), 365 Adelaide St. East, Toronto M5B 4R9, Ontario; Crown International Inc., 1718 W. Mishawaka Rd., Elkhart, IN 46514; Panasonic Technics, One Panasonic Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094; Inovonics Inc., 503-B Vandell Way, Campbell CA 95008; Heath Co., Benton Harbor, MI 49022.

Bob Parent is a New York freelance photographer-filmmaker. He is a member of SMPTE, an instructor and member of the Board of Directors of Millenium Film Workshop, and a member of AIVF.



HOME MOVIES

TRIMMING THE CLASSICS

Bill Compton describes himself as a "filmopath." Like most of us, he's crazy about movies, and fortunately, his work is also his therapy. Compton edits Universal's feature-length films down to 17 or 18 minutes for Universal 8's booming new Super 400 series.

In August, 1976 Jordan Deutsch replaced the ailing Murray Goodman as the head of Castle Films, pioneers in 8mm releases and a subsidiary of Universal Pictures since 1947. Within a year the enterprising Deutsch has completely revitalized the operation. Plunging in where Columbia and Fox ventured a few years ago, he has introduced the Super 400 and Super 100 series into the catalog, redesigned the packaging of the films' boxes, created a new logo, and in a logical move to identify his product more closely with its parent studio, changed the name Castle Films to Universal 8. (Universal 8's address is 445 Park Ave., New York, NY 10022.)

The Super 400 series is mounted on a 400-foot reel with a magnetic sound stripe. The burgeoning popularity of the series, which includes such titles as *Psycho, Airport, Thoroughly Modern Millie,* and *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (available in 3-D yet), is fast making the old 200-footers a thing of the past. It's a far cry from the old 3- or 5-minute excerpts from Abbott & Costello flicks to the sophisticated expertise Bill Compton brings to such Super 400 models as *Frenzy* and *The Birds*.

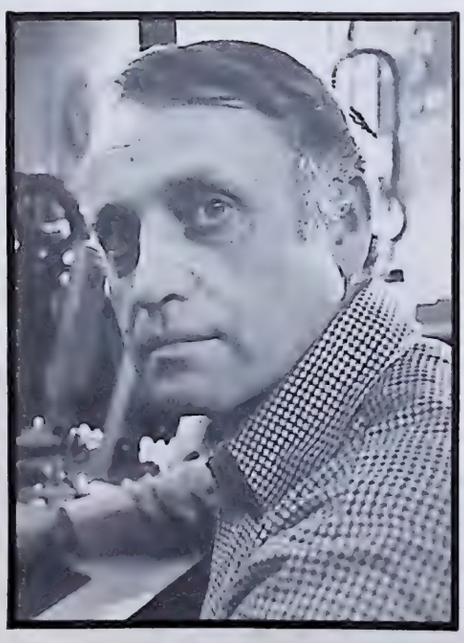
Deutsch seems to have his finger right on the pulse of a major untapped market-place for home movies. Eight-mm films appeal to film buffs, home moviemakers and operators, and libraries and educational facilities. For example, it is possible to view Compton's reduced version of Hitchcock's *Psycho*, and study in detail the classic shower sequence, a virtuoso piece of directing that remains intact in the Super 400 edition. Similarly, the rape and murder from *Frenzy* and the dog-fight from *The Great Waldo Pepper* are available in both 400-foot and 100-foot sound versions for repeated viewings, so that the student and buff alike can observe the construction of these difficult, complex sequences.

In the year that he has headed Universal 8, Deutsch has proven himself an astute judge of his potential market. He has introduced 60 new pieces in various formats during the past year, and projects between 30 and 40 new titles for 1978.

Editor Bill Compton came to his job with a considerable background in theater. He edited Castle Films for three years before Universal 8 was formed in 1976. Compton eagerly discussed his work with me recently; the excitement he feels for his job is palpable, and his delight in films is evident in the finished product.

Compton's edits are never trailers or a series of highlights from the feature-length film on which he is working. Acutely aware of the awesome responsibility of his job, especially when dealing with the films of a director such as Hitchcock, Compton feels his primary duty is to respect the rhythm and mood of the original. Each film must have a clear beginning, middle and end. Compton strips the original down to essentials, eliminating as much dialogue as possible ("Dialogue kills me," he groans). He concentrates most of the dialogue at the beginning, in an effort to avoid the ever-present danger of characters discussing situations or incidents which do not appear in his version. He emphasizes the visual, dispensing with extraneous expositions and allowing the relationships to evolve out of the action.

Due to the brevity of the films, everything must be contracted. The trick is finding that essential scene which contains the dramatic core of the movie. The emphasis varies according to the film. In the case of *The Wolf Man*, Compton concerned himself foremost with the strong narrative element. In a musical such as *Sweet Charity*, the spine of the film rests on its musical numbers, so Compton structured his excerpt around the spectacular "I'm a Brass Band" number. Still again, in *My Name is Nobody*, what Compton refers to as a "performance" film, he took his impetus from the relationship between Henry Fonda and Terence Hill.



Bill Compton at work

Retaining the feel of the original is a challenging job, but it's a challenge Compton gleefully accepts, and, in the sampling of his work I've seen, decisively meets. If Bill Compton's creative editing and Jordan Deutsch's sure-fire showmanship continue to interact as effectively as they have during its initial year, Universal 8 may turn out to be one of the biggest boons in years for collectors, buffs, and students.

George Morris

HOME MOVIE NEWS

A selection of features available for sale in 16mm:

Mark Lamberti, at Syndicate Films (7411 Hines Place, Dallas, TX 75235; 214-630-3822) has 100 of the Republic Westerns for home use, plus such classics as *Border Feud* (with Lash Larue—see the article in our last issue), *Lawless Frontier* (John Wayne, Gabby Hayes, Yakima Canutt), *Juggernaut* (Boris Karloff), and a number of Roy Rogers and Buster Crabbe films. Prices range from $144 to $159, and all films are available in Betamax format too.

Our friends at Reel Images (see their ad on the inside front cover) have released their 1978 catalog, with literally hundreds of features, trailers and shorts listed (including four Ruth Etting features, an integral version of Von Stroheim's *Foolish Wives*, and Chuck Jones's *Hell Bent for Election*). Some films are available in Super-8 as well.

Another extensive catalog is that of Glenn Photo Supply (16024 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA 91436; 213-981-5506). Included are four rare Disney films from the 20s; Martin Scorsese's directorial debut, *What's a Nice Girl Like You Doing in a Place Like This?*: and 11 Hitchcock features.

Festival Films (4445 Aldrich Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55409; 612-822-2680) has sent us a copy of their catalog. Some of their recent 16mm releases are Cocteau's *Orpheus*, Mel Brooks' *The Producers*, Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu*, Kurosawa's *Yojimbo*, Welles' *The Trial*, Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*, and four "Star Trek" episodes.

continued on page 49

George Morris is the author of John Garfield, *just published by Pyramid. His book on the Hollywood melodrama of the 1950s will be published in the fall of 1978.*

BOOKS NEWS

Peter Cowie is positively the hardest-working person we know. How he manages to run London's prestigious Tantivy Press (and edit their annual *International Film Guide*), and still show up at as many film festivals as he does has always been something of a mystery. Now, the crazy fool has embarked on yet another project that might—all by itself—daunt weaker souls: a World Filmography. This is a series of books (to be published over a 15-year period) that will eventually cover (year by year) every year from the birth of cinema to the present day. The book covering each year will list the credits for *every* feature film made anywhere in the world that year, classified by country and indexed by titles, alternative titles and directors.

The 688-page *World Filmography 1967* has just appeared, signalling the start of this mad and exciting enterprise. It includes well over 1500 features (over 1000 metres in length), from *Bonnie & Clyde* to *Playtime* and *The Firemen's Ball*, from such varied countries as Algeria, Ceylon, Finland and North Vietnam, as well as the more traditional sources. Here, at *Take One*, we'll be keeping it right next to our dictionary. Tantivy Press, London, 20.00 pounds Sterling; Barnes & Co., New York, $35.00.

New in print:

The folks at Cinemateca Distrital (Cra 7 No. 22—79, Bogota, Columbia) have sent along a copy of Vol. 1 No. 1 of their new monthly, *Cinema Teca*, with articles (in Spanish) on Woody Allen, Frankenstein, Swiss Cinema, as well as—of course—plenty of coverage of filmmaking activity in Latin America. If you think you might be interested in subscribing, contact Isador de Norden at the Cinemateca Distrital.

Chamba Notes has been revived (after a gap of three years) as a quarterly ($4 a year) on the independent Black film scene from a world Pan-African perspective. Write St. Clair Bourne, Publisher, at P.O. Box U, Brooklyn, NY 11202 (212-757-6300).

Another quarterly debuting this month is *Millenium Film Journal* (66 East 4th St., NYC 10003; 212-673-0090). It features articles, interviews and reviews dedicated to avant-garde film and to film theory.

Mindrot ("The Fanzine of the Hollywood Animated Cartoon") has had eight issues out, the work of David and Kathy Mruz (3112 Holmes Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408), but only numbers 5-8 are still available (at $1.25 apiece). Issue 8 includes articles on Betty Boop and George Pal, plus lots of news, letters and funny drawings.

And our good friends at Kodak have put together a 56-page guide to preparing and producing effective magnetic sound tracks, called *Sound—Magnetic Sound Recording for Motion Pictures*. Written for professional filmmakers as well as cinema students, the book has a suggested list price of $6.25 and is available from many Kodak dealers, or from Bud Morrison, Communications Department, Kodak Canada, 3500 Eglinton Ave. W., Toronto, Ontario M6M 1V3 (416-766-8233, ext. 6637).

Up-coming Books

Putnam has scheduled *Groucho*, the authorized biography, by Hector Arce, for this spring. ... Also due, from Random House, is *170 Years of Show Business*, by Jack Gilford, his wife Madeline, and Kate Mostel. Zero Mostel was also involved until his death—in this anecdotal history of two generations of showbiz families. ... Columbia Pictures has signed Paige Mitchell (author of *Covenant*) to write a novel about Houston—to be called *The Cutting Edge*—which will then be filmed. ... Scribners has scheduled for May *All About Mankiewicz*, by Kenneth Geist. ... And our own contributor Stuart Kaminsky will have his *John Huston: Maker of Magic* published by Houghton Mifflin in March.

REVIEWS

How to Read a Film *by James Monaco. Oxford University Press. 1977. 391 pages plus glossary, bibliography, and chronology. With 36 diagrams by David Lindroth. $15.00.*

James Monaco's *How to Read a Film* has the awesome subtitle "The Art, Technology, Language, History and Theory of Film and Media." All-inclusive as the subtitle sounds, it is appropriate, for *How to Read a Film* is the most comprehensive single volume on film I have seen. Monaco's background as a teacher is evident (he is a member of the faculty of the New School for Social Research and has taught at other major New York City universities), for the book seems to have been designed as a textbook for introductory college students in film, media, and communications courses. That does not mean however, that *How to Read a Film* would not be of great value to more advanced students or to the general film-going public. What is impressive about Monaco's book is not just that it encompasses so much, but that Monaco is adept at explaining both technological and theoretical approaches to film and media. In addition, he integrates the two approaches and demonstrates how they affect each other.

Monaco begins his book by placing film, historically and aesthetically, into the context of the other arts, and thereby provides a framework for what will follow. Part of film's uniqueness is determined by its technology, and it is Monaco's section on the recording and reproducing of image and sound that is one of his strongest. It is in this section that the lucid diagrams by David Lindroth are especially valuable. In his chapter on the language of film, its signs and syntax, Monaco subscribes to the dictum of Christian Metz that "A film is difficult to explain because it is easy to understand." Within essentially a semiotic mold with room for other approaches, Monaco confronts the basic issues of semiology and makes them not only understandable, but relevant to the unsophisticated reader. Along with Peter Wollen's *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, Monaco's chapter offers film students a suitable introduction to the science of semiology.

Unfortunately, the section on film history sometimes lapses into superficiality. In an attempt to mention as many people and films as possible, this chapter at its weakest point consists of little more than lists. The film theory section, on the other hand, contains in-depth discussions of Vachel Lindsay, Hugo Münsterberg, Rudolf Arnheim, Siegfried Kracauer, the Russians, Bazin, Godard, Metz, and others. This chapter, as a companion to J. Dudley Andrew's *The Major Film Theories*, is an indispensable aid to the introductory film student.

Monaco wraps up the book with a sketchy, but interesting chapter on media, not from a McLuhan point of view, as is often the case, but from an aesthetic and social stance. The appendices which follow would by themselves almost make the book worth buying. A well-conceived and rather complete standard glossary of terms for film and media criticism is followed by a annotated bibliography (which even includes lists of journals, guides, and film bookstores) and by a chronology of some important dates in film and media history.

Monaco's approach is frequently dialectical, and as in Eisenstein's editing, the dialectics are used to elucidate and to create tension. It is through the dialectics that he presents oppositions so meaningful to an understanding of film: "....between filmmaker and subject, film and observer, establishment and avant garde, conservative purposes and purposes of liberation, psychology and politics, image and sound, dialogue and music, montage and mise en scène, genre and auteur, literary sensibility and cinematic sensibility, signs and mean-

ings, culture and society, form and function, design and purpose, sex and violence, syntagmas and paradigms, image and event, realism and expressionism, language and phenomenology....."

The few shortcomings of the book I have mentioned are more distractions than detractions. My only serious criticism is that, with the exception of the discussions of Godard, the main emphasis of the book is narrative fiction film. Documentary, experimental film, personal and political cinema are mentioned, but are not given the same attention and importance as are the more commercial aspects of the medium.

Despite these shortcomings, *How to Read a Film* is an invaluable aid to the study of film. It would not surprise me if it became a classic.

John Stuart Katz

John Stuart Katz is Chairman of the Film Department at York University in Toronto. His published works include Perspective on the Study of Film *[1971] and* A Curriculum in Film *[1972].*

Authorship and Narrative in the Cinema by William Luhr and Peter Lehman. Putnam. 1977. 320 pp. $10.50 and $4.95. (In Canada: Longman)

The World in a Frame by Leo Braudy. Anchor Books. 1976. 274 pp. $4.50. (In Canada: $9.95 cloth)

How to Read a Film by James Monaco. Oxford. 1977. 502 pp. $17.25 and $6.95.

Every spring and summer, teachers of introductory courses in film engage in their favourite futility rite: the search for the definitive manual for students. Such a manual must try to join irreconcilable opposites: scholarly erudition and exciting reading, a solid base in theory and a primary concern for chronology and fact, depth of understanding and breadth of view, a clearly-defined thesis and an open-ended demonstration allowing a place for the student's creativity, and so on. Needless to say, the rite is never exhausted, since this is a field in which methods of analysis are varied and inherently speculative, and in which pedagogical problems are poorly understood and rarely debated to good effect.

Three new texts have been launched into this unstable market over the past year. Each presents its own view of the discipline, each its own historiographic model, each its own strategies for film analysis, and each its own epistemology. Each will serve the teacher and student of film in different ways. None, of course, is perfect.

The Luhr-Lehman and Braudy texts both view as the proper object of study the dramatic feature of commercial cinema. Each accepts the principle of directorial authorship without elevating auteurism to the point where the primacy of the individual film (as text) is submerged. Monaco sees the medium itself in all its forms, all its relations, all its contexts as the proper object of study. His text offers students the fullest appreciation of the present state of film studies through a protracted discussion of the analytical methods proposed by semiology, and an overview of film history and film theory. Braudy's text, on the other hand, redefines the domain of film studies by proposing its own models and dismissing the more systematic schools of film study as unnecessarily restrictive, saying that they narrow the field of study too stringently (the modernist aesthetic), develop hermetic systems and esoteric terminologies (semiology) or elevate a taxonomy to a sole criterion of value (the worst excesses of auteurism). The Luhr-Lehman text, sad to say, completely neglects the tradition of film scholarship for the domain of popular film journalism.

Each text offers an approach which overtly or covertly discloses an attitude to film history. The Monaco text includes a section on the Shape of Film History and is the only one to offer a view of critical alternatives—the economic history, the political and the aesthetic—but does not suggest a methodology by which these could be linked. It proposes a compartmentalized series of oppositions corresponding to different periods in the development of the cinema (Lumière vs. Méliès for the primitives, realism vs. expressionism for the silent feature, genre vs. auteur for Hollywood in the thirties, etc.) which unfortunately omits as much as it includes; for instance, the growth of the pictorial emphasis in the early silent period or the challenge to traditional dramatic notions of plot in Europe in the later silent period.

Braudy's text offers an overall scheme of oppositions founded on the essential distinction between the open film and the closed film. The open film uses frame (in both literal and metaphorical senses) as a window opening onto a broader world, while the closed film uses it as enclosure, limiting and defining its world by what is captured therein. This dichotomy is extended to film director, types of narrative, handling of genres, visual style, the direction of actors, and so on. In place of the hoary chestnut of the Lumière-Méliès dichotomy, Braudy proposes Renoir and Lang, the former as the exponent of the open film, the latter of the closed film. Braudy's notion of film history is one which progressively conforms to the model of criticism he proposes: a move away from the narrow, the restrictive and the systematic to the liberal humanist ideal of unpredictable individualism.

Luhr and Lehman do not propose a historical model. Instead, they see the body of film production as discontinuous. Films or artists of value are those which transcend the restrictions of genre or narrative in the exercise of a coherent formal aesthetic, preferably complex and requiring rigorous analysis to become apparent. The interest and value of any film or oeuvre lies in the degree to which it escapes its historical moment. Such an approach will appeal to teachers who wish to avoid film history in favour of formal analysis in the initial stages.

The programme for film analysis is handled very differently from text to text. Luhr and Lehman's approach extends to film the tools of practical criticism or *explication de texte* derived from the prevailing academic models of literary criticism and adapted to the formal demands of the film medium. They assert the primacy of the medium over narrative and of the individual film within an author's oeuvre, useful reminders to students who wish to proceed from the known and the specific to the unknown and the general. However, the method also has its dangers: the lack of a historical dimension in the study of style and convention can obscure the distinction between the stylistically significant and the recourse to established convention.

Braudy's method, while insisting on the importance of parallelism and polarities within the work, is altogether more committed to intertextuality. His approach is overtly eclectic and thus far more individualistic and less systematic. His discussion of works always takes into consideration the broad conventional framework in which they are operating. The disadvantage of such a method is that it places a high premium on the individual's sensibility.

Monaco's text offers an account of the semiological approach to film. It is as lucid and thorough a précis as one can imagine in a book destined for students unfamiliar with the approach. But the teacher may find that this approach becomes too concerned with the perfection of its own system, so that an incautious student may lose sight of the primary object, the film.

Ultimately, the test of the usefulness of such manuals lies in the epistemology they suggest. The value of the Luhr-Lehman text is its practical demonstration of protracted analysis of specific films. It teaches by example in a way that can be quickly learned. Its drawbacks are its lack of historical perspective and its desire to win battles that are no longer relevant to film scholarship.

Braudy's book offers the encompassing pattern (open-closed) as a model—which requires considerable sophistication on the part of both student and teacher if it is to be harnessed or challenged.

Monaco adopts the encyclopedic and pluralistic approach, allowing ample scope for selection and reference by student and teacher alike. Where Braudy seeks synthesis in a speculative manner, Monaco offers

analytical models and proposes new taxonomies, however partial or incomplete, to allow fuller access to the discipline as it exists today.

Though none of these texts can hope to satisfy all teachers and students of film, Lehman provides some interesting new insights into two films by John Ford; Braudy's sections on the musical and on film acting should be basic reading; and Monaco provides the clearest account of film technology and the best glossary of terms to appear in a manual for film study so far. While one might wait for the Lehman chapters to be anthologized, the Braudy and Monaco texts deserve inclusion in any serious film student's library for these elements alone.

David Clandfield

***David Clandfield** teaches film at the University of Toronto.*

King Lear: The Space of Tragedy *by Grigori Kozintsev. Translated by Mary Mackintosh. University of California Press, 272 pages. Illustrated. $14.95.*

It's like having Kozintsev at your elbow for a shot-by-shot replay of the magnificent film he made of *King Lear.*

This book is Kozintsev's diary kept from 1968-72 as he planned and proceeded with his film. As we know from his earlier volume of essays and diary, *Shakespeare: Time and Conscience* (Hill and Wang: 1966), Kozintsev's mind ranges across a vast literature when he approaches a work. One can mine the present volume for extended discussions of Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Gogol, Blok, Meyerhold, or Mifune, Kurosawa, Teshigahara, Eisenstein, and Peter Brook, or Brecht, Gordon Craig, Chekhov, Stanislavsky, or such topics as Ikebana (the sacrificial cruelty of flower arranging!), the Mask, music in film, time and space on stage and screen. And everywhere the author is intensely engaged with Shakespeare, as if the whole world came to brighter life when viewed through the prism of its greatest dramatist. The book demonstrates how much of the artist goes into his work. It's as if everything that Kozintsev ever read or saw was preparation for his master work.

There are delightful anecdotes. Like how Kozintsev turned Russia inside out trying to find a Lear. He found one in the Estonian actor, Yuri Yarvet, who had only come in to play beggar Tom. Kozintsev saw his Lear in Yarvet's eyes. Yarvet laughed when he was called back to Leningrad to screen test for the starring role, but he went anyway, and ended up giving one of the most brilliant performances in film.

The book is sometimes slow reading, because Kozintsev's mind moves so fast: his lightning ellipses often take contemplation. The translation is not without its obscurities, though we are well-served with footnotes to explain unfamiliar allusions. All in all, this is a splendid reminder of how intensely a man of culture can engage all his knowledge, intuition and humanity in making a movie.

Maurice Yacowar

***Maurice Yacowar** is associate professor of English and Drama at Brock University, and author of* Hitchcock's British Films *and* Tennessee Williams and Film.

Alexander Kluge & The Occasional Work of a Female Slave *ed. by Jan Dawson. A Perth Film Festival Publication, 1975. 48 pp. $2.50.*

Wim Wenders *by Jan Dawson [trans. by Carla Wartenberg]. A Festival of Festivals Publication, Toronto, 1976. 32 pp. $2.50 [In the U.S. both pamphlets are available from N.Y. Zoetrope. In Canada,* Wim Wenders *is available through Cine Books.]*

For most of us in North America, European movies mean the films of France, Italy, and Sweden. Since the mid-60s, however, an extraordinary number of interesting films have come out of West Germany; and Alexander Kluge, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Wim Wenders, Volker Schlöndorff, and Werner Herzog are increasingly becoming filmmakers we have to deal with. When Jan Dawson was in Toronto in October '76 to organize the German section of Toronto's marathon Festival of Festivals, I asked her when these films got started; how, in fact, they first hit the air.

Well the very first film was made in 1966 and the air which it hit was the Venice Film Festival. The film in question was called *Yesterday Girl* and it was directed by Alexander Kluge, whose first feature film it was. However, it didn't come out of the air. It came out of a strong ideological and economic base. In 1962, a group of German short filmmakers had launched a now quite celebrated manifesto during the Oberhausen Film Festival in which they'd provocatively declared things like: The old cinema is dead—long live the new! And perhaps more important, they'd included in their manifesto a statement which read: We are prepared collectively to take economic risks.

One of the first results of their attempts to get facilities for independent production was the establishment of something in Germany called the Kuratorium of Young German Film, which acted as an agent for financing first

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feature films. Kluge himself was at that time both a short filmmaker and a practising lawyer. He became from 1962 and remains to the present day the spokesman of the Young German Cinema group, and it was perhaps fittingly his first feature which became the first Kuratorium production, and which won virtually every prize at the Venice Film Festival when it was first shown there in 1966.

Yesterday Girl drew directly upon the inspiration of Godard, especially upon *Vivre Sa Vie*. But with a difference. Kluge's film is less concerned with an innovative use of cinema than it is with the accuracy of its social analysis. It is thus more directly political than Godard's films were at that time. So it is with a good many of these films. The New German Cinema sprang less from an aesthetic excitement than from a political necessity—the necessity for economic survival. As Jan Dawson explains it:

> The New German Cinema isn't aesthetically a unified school. It's very much a movement that has grown out of economic opportunities; and I think that where it differs from the French New Wave or from the new Canadian cinema (such as it is) is that the filmmakers recognized very early on that to create the conditions in which the kind of productions they were interested in could be made they had to work collectively on the political level.

So they organized themselves in such a way that they were able to make their films very cheaply—sometimes for as little as $30,000. And diverse as these films are, they are nearly all concerned with a rigorous questioning of the values of German society. To refer to Jan Dawson once again:

> The movement itself was born of a questioning of both society and a part of its establishment in the form of the national film industry which was dominated very crudely by certain vested and not too subtle interests. I think that running through nearly all of the films is a severe questioning of social values as received. And it's not just a sort of to-

American influences gave Wenders an alternative to the expectations of German middle-class respectibility.

kenism or a fashionable stance. To make films in the kind of conditions these guys started out with you have to be really committed to changing society. I think you have to have already a certain political sense.

> I think also that being German and growing up after the war obviously presents a fairly traumatic set of problems concerning your own identity; particularly if, on the one hand, you're being encouraged to forget your past, to gloss over the Nazi Period and to pretend it didn't happen, while on the other hand, you're being encouraged to adopt the emblem and life-style of the United States. And Germany is weird in this respect. It's probably the only country ever to fall in love with its occupying army.

Within this situation, the new German filmmakers have set out to establish both an alternative way of making films and a style that will allow them to interrogate this love affair between their own country and American values.

The influence of American culture is most noticeable in the films of Wim Wenders. All his films are filled with juke boxes, constantly playing American rock; and many of them are virtually road movies—films about people in cars with no fixed point of rest, about people moving on. But far from feeling colonized by these American influences, Wenders actually felt liberated by them. They gave him an alternative to the expectations of German middle-class respectability. They actually 'saved his life.' As he explains about rock music in the long interview which forms the bulk of one of the monographs under review:

> [Rock Music] gave me the idea of finding out about life. When I was 12 or 14 years old. It was the first thing I appreciated, like everybody else, that wasn't inherited. There was nobody to teach me to like it. On the contrary, there were plenty of people teaching me to dislike it, to tell me how useless and tasteless it was...That's the way it was...rock'n' roll led me to everything: It led me to film-making. Without rock'n'-roll, maybe I would be a lawyer now. And a lot of people would be somebody else. (p.11)

But the acceptance of American values is not so free-wheeling in most of these films. Indeed, in a way that relates directly to the American rebuilding of West German capitalism, most of the films are about exploitation. In their different ways, the films of Herzog, Schlöndorff, and Fassbinder attack this problem directly, whether the exploitation be of dwarfs (Herzog), of women (Schlöndorff), or of homosexuals (Fassbinder).

Alexander Kluge has also concerned himself with the exploitation of women, both in *Yesterday Girl* (1966) and in *The Occasional Work of a Female Slave* (1974). But basically, he is interested in the relationship of the individual to the family unit and of the family unit to the rest of society—especially in the way that, indirectly, the family unit embodies the same 'acquisitive' values as the world outside. As he explains in the other monograph under review:

> If the distinction between public and private is the main element of the society which believes in property, it follows that the family is an elementary organism of this society. In the same way that the entrepreneur accumulates money, the family accumulates warmth, human relationships, for themselves. Happiness for themselves, and neglect for anyone else. (p.27)

Both these monographs prepared by Jan Dawson are a valuable introduction to two important filmmakers in West Germany today. Although they both have the appearance of being thrown together for a festival occasion (there is not even a filmography for the Kluge monograph), the extended interviews with both Wim Wenders and Alexander Kluge are full of insights into the work of these directors; and the detailed script of Kluge's *The Occasional Work of a Female Slave*, even for those who haven't seen the film, will convey some of the simplicity, energy, and directness that characterize Kluge's work.

Perhaps if Jan Dawson goes on producing such monographs they will accumulate into a book on the New German Cinema. I certainly hope so.

Peter Harcourt

Peter Harcourt founded the Film Studies Department at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, and is the author of Six European Directors [*Penguin*].

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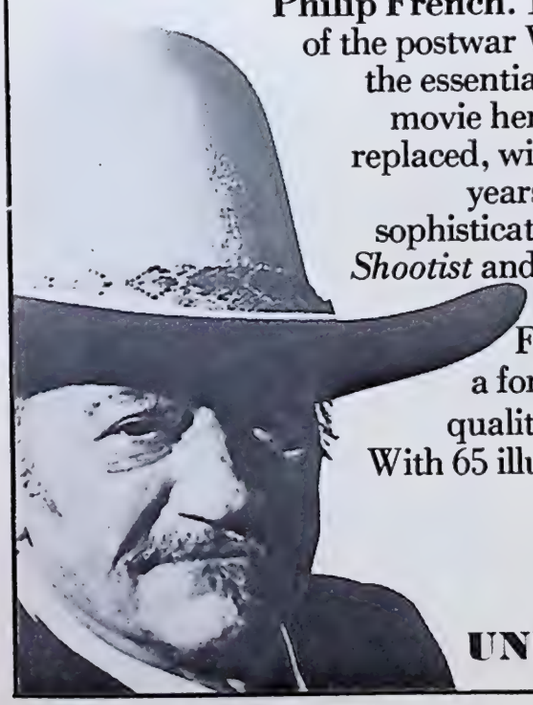

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New books dealing in whole or in part with the motion picture and issued, for the most part, in the English language by North American publishers; also new editions of out-of-print titles, and novels the significance of which transcends their fictional format. Canadian agents and prices (where differing from U.S. publisher and price) are noted in brackets.

Awake in the Dark. David Denby, editor. Random House 1977. 396 pp. $4.95 (P). ($5.95). American film criticism, 1915 to the present.

Basic Animation Stand Techniques. By Brian G.D. Salt. Pergamon 1977. 239 pp. $12.50 (H). ($13.80).

The Jack Benny Show. by Milt Josefsberg. Arlington 1977. 496 $12.95 (H). (Dent, $14.95). The entertainer's life and times.

Bud and Lou. By Bob Thomas. Lippincott 1977. 224 pp. $10.00 (H). (McClelland & Stewart, $11.50). The Abbott and Costello story.

Raymond Chandler Speaking. Dorothy Gardiner and Kathrine Sorley Walker, editors. Houghton & Mifflin 1977. 271 pp. $5.95 (P). (Thos. Allen, $7.95). A collection of letters by the late scriptwriter / novelist.

Cinema Booklist Supplement 2. By George Rehrauer. Scarecrow 1977. 482 pp. $15.00 (H). Bibliography of film literature 1973-75.

The Civil War on the Screen. By Jack Spears. Barnes 1977. 240 pp. $17.50 (H). (Smithers & Bonnellie). The American Civil War, that is. Also contains essays on Nazimova, Edwin S. Porter and Louis Wolheim.

Cliffhanger. By Alan G. Barbour. A &W Publishers 1977. 248 pp. $14.95 (H). (Gage, $8.95 and $17.95). A pictorial history of the motion picture serial.

The Dino di Laurentiis Production of King Kong. By Lorenzo Semple Jr. Ace Books 1977. 179 pp. $1.95 (P). (Grosset & Dunlap). The complete screenplay.

The Disney Poster Book. Introduction by Maurice Sendak. Crown 1977. 48 pp. $5.95 (P). (General, $7.25). Large size reproductions of 24 full colour Disney posters.

Encyclopedia of the Third Reich. by Louis L Snyder. McGraw-Hill 1976. 410 pp. $24.95 (H). Contains references to film.

The Fabulous Fantasy Films. By Jeff Rovin. Barnes 1977. 271 pp. $19.95 (H). (Smithers & Bonnellie, $26.00).

Festivals Sourcebook. Paul Wasserman, editor. Gale 1977. 656 pp. $45.00 (H). A comprehensive annotated listing of 3800 all-type festivals, including film, in the U.S.A. and Canada.

Film Animation: A Simplified Approach. By John Halas. Unipub 1976. 93 pp. $3.30 (P). The basic rules of animation.

Film in Sweden: The New Directors. By Stig Björkman. Barnes 1977. 128 pp. $6.95 (H). (Smithers & Bonnellie).

Film Literature Index 1975. Vincent J. Aceto, Jane Graves, Fred Silva, editors. Bowker 1977. 609 pp. $65.00 (H). Index to the contents of 140 world-wide film periodicals and 140 English-language general and scholarly publications.

Film Making. By Mik Derks and Steve Poster. Petersen 1977. 80 pp. $3.95 (P). (General, $4.50). Hollywood film techniques for home movies.

A Fine Mess! Richard J. Anobile, ed. Avon 1977. 256 pp. $4.95 (P). (Barrdawn, $4.95). Verbal and visual gems from Laurel & Hardy films.

The Flicks, or Whatever Became of Andy Hardy? By Charles Champlin. Ward Ritchie 1977. 276 pp. $12.95 (H). (Van Nostrand, $15.50). A critic's look at the movies of the last 30 years.

Fonzie! By Martin A. Grove. Zebra 1976. 170 pp. $1.95 (P). A biography of the popular actor.

From Jules Verne to Star Trek. By Jeff Rovin. Drake 1977. 147 pp. $6.95 (P). (General $8.50). The best sci-fi films and TV shows.

Full Length Animated Feature Films. By Bruno Edera. Hastings House 1977. 198 pp. $35.00 (H). (Saunders $43.75).

Good Looking. David A. Sohn, ed. North American Publishing Co. 1977. 241 pp. $8.95 (H), $5.95 (P). Readings in film study.

Great Monsters of the Movies. Robert K. Davidon. Pyramid 1977. 128 pp. $1.25 (P). (Barrdawn).

Guide to Location Information 1977-78. John M. Pavlik, ed. Association of Motion Picture and Television Producers 1977. 337 pp. $15.00 (P). Data on permits, regulations, etc. for shooting in numerous US locations.

Haywire. By Brooke Hayward. Knopf 1977. 325,pp. $10.00 (H). (Random House, $11.50). Memoirs by the daughter of actress Margaret Sullivan and producer Leland Hayward.

Henry, Jane and Peter. By Jack Stewart. Belmont Tower 1977. 208 pp. $1.50 (P). A study of the Fonda family.

His Majesty The American. By John C. Tibbetts and James M. Welsh. Barnes 1977. 223 pp. $17.50 (H). (Smithers & Bonnellie, $22.75). The films of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.

His Weird and Wanton Ways. By Richard Mathison. Morrow 1977. 247 pp. $8.95 (H). (Gage, $10.50). The secret life of Howard Hughes, incl. his involvement in movies.

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Hitchcock's British Films. By Maurice Yacowar. Shoe String Press 1977. 314 pp. $17.50 (H). An analysis of 23 features, from 1925-1939.

Hollywood Renaissance. By Diana Jacobs. Barnes 1977. 192 pp. $12.00 (H). (Smithers & Bonnellie, $15.75). Essays on directors Altman, Cassavetes, Coppola, Mazursky and Scorcese.

Hollywood Starlet: The Career of Barbara Lawrence. By Jim Connor. SLP Publications 1977. 160 pp. $11.95 (H).

How to Read a Film. By James Monaco. Oxford U. Press 1977. 502 pp. $15.00 (H). $6.00 (P). ($17.25 & $6.95). A study of the art, technology, language, history and theory of film and media.

How to Save Your Own Life. By Erica Jong. Holt Rinehart & Winston 1977. 310 pp. $8.95 (H). ($9.95). A novel with a Hollywood roman à clef section.

The Hurrell Style. Photographs by George Hurrell, text by Whitney Stine. Crowell 1976. 218 pp. $15.95 (H). (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, $19.95). Portraits of Hollywood stars of the last 50 years.

I Love You, Clark Gable, Etc. By George Tashman. Brombacher 1977. 159 pp. $2.95 (P). Profiles of 22 "male sex symbols."

India Song. By Marguerite Duras. Grove Press 1976. 146 pp. $3.95 (P). (Random House, $4.75). The screenplay of the film.

International Index to Film Periodicals 1975. Frances Thorpe, editor. St. Martin's Press 1977. 511 pp. $30.00 (H). (Macmillan, $35.00).

Is There Life After High School? By Ralph Keyes. Warner 1977. 256 pp. $1.95 (P). High school memories of various film stars.

Jean Cocteau and His Films of Orphic Identity. By Arthur B. Evans. Art Alliance Press 1977. 174 pp. $12.00 (H). (Smithers & Bonnellie).

Jewish Films in the United States. Compiled by Stuart Fox. G.K. Hall 1976. 359 pp. $40.00 (H). A comprehensive survey and descriptive filmography.

King Lear: The Space of Tragedy. By Grigori Kozintzev. U. of California Press 1977. 260 pp. $14.95 (H). The Director's diary while shooting the film.

Vivien Leigh. By Anne Edwards. Simon & Schuster 1977. 319 pp. $9.95 (H). ($11.95). A biography of the actress.

Jack Lemmon. By Will Holtzman. Pyramid 1977. 160 pp. $1.95 (P). The actor's biography.

Love, Honor and Dismay. By Elizabeth Harrison. Doubleday 1977. 202 pp. $7.95 (H). ($8.95). Rex Harrison's and Richard Harris' ex-wife tells all.

Myrna Loy. By Karyn Kay. Pyramid 1977. 160 pp. $1.95 (P). The late star's biography.

The Lubitsch Touch. By Herman G. Weinberg. Dover 1977. 366 pp. $4.00 (P). (General, $4.75). The 3rd revised and enlarged edition of a classical study.

The Magician of Sunset Boulevard. By Frederick Kohner. Morgan Press 1977. 198 pp. $10.00 (H). A biography of Hollywood talent agent Paul Kohner.

The Making of "The Other Side of Midnight." By Bruce Bahrenburg. Dell 1977. 254 pp. $1.95 (P).

The Most Important Art. By Mira Liehm and Antonin J. Liehm. U of California 1977. 473 pp. $23.50 (H). A study of East European films after 1945.

Motion Picture Camera and Lighting Equipment. By David W. Samuelson. Hastings House 1977. 220 pp. $8.95 (P). (Saunders of Toronto, $7.95).

The Movie Buff's Book 2. Ted Sennett, editor. Pyramid 1977. 160 pp. $4.95 (P). A quiz book.

The Movies Begin: Making Movies in New Jersey. By Paul C. Spehr. Newark Museum 1977. 190 pp. $13.95 (P). The 1887-1920 era.

Notes on Cinematography. By Robert Bresson. Urizen 1977. 72 pp. $6.95 (H). $3.50 (P). Clarke Irwin, $8.50 & $3.50). Views and opinions of the French director.

One Good Film Deserves Another. By Michael B. Druxman. Barnes 1977. 175 pp. $15.00 (H). (Smithers & Bonnellie, $19.50). A pictorial survey of film sequels.

Our Gang. By Leonard Maltin and Richard W. Bann. Crown 1977. 288 pp. $12.95 (H). (General, $15.95). Hal Roach's Little Rascals comedy team.

Preminger: An Autobiography. Doubleday 1977. 208 pp. $8.95 (H). ($9.95).

The Quotations of W.C. Fields. Martin Lewis, editor. Drake 1977. 160 pp. $3.95 (P). (General, $4.75).

The Samurai Film. By Alain Silver. Barnes 1977. 242 pp. $12.50 (H). (Smithers & Bonnellie). History of the Japanese film genre.

Sarnoff. By Carl Dreher. Quadrangle 1977. 282 pp. $12.50). A biography of the RCA chairman.

Science Fiction and Horror Movie Posters. Alan Adler, editor. Dover 1977. 41 pp. $6.00 (P). (General, $6.95). 44 large size colour reproductions.

Sinatra's Women. By Gerry Romero. Manor 1977. 224 pp. $1.75 (P). (Random House, $2.25). The loves of the performer.

Small Change. By François Truffaut. Grove 1976. 190 pp. $1.95 (P). (Random House, $2.25). The film's screenplay in novelized form.

Home Movies, *cont'd.*

Despite their name, Cinema Eight (91 Main St., Chester, CN 06412; 203-526-9513) offers a number of films in the 16mm format as well, including: four Emil Cohl cartoons, Winsor McKay's *Gertie the Dinosaur,* Buster Keaton in *Steamboat Bill Jr.*, Jean Vigo's *L'Atalante*, Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*, and some of Hitchcock's early features. Write for the complete catalog.

Next issue, we'll list some sources for features in Super-8.

Full-service in Super-8

Adams & Associates (1645 Bank St., Ottawa, Ontario K1V 7Z1; 613-731-6416) are Super-8 distributors with a difference. Not only do they offer a wide range of new films for sale (including, most recently, 10 minutes of highlights—in colour, with sound—from *Star Wars*), but their monthly *Super-8 Notes* is a fund of information on the technical aspects of making and showing small-gauge films, and also extensively evaluates new equipment. A one-year subscription is only $2 to addresses outside Canada (it's free to Canadians). Vic Adams will also buy back used films (in good condition) for half of his new price, recondition them, and re-sell them at at 20 percent markup. An inexpensive way to expand or renew your library.

Imagine 8

Plan now to attend the 1978 Toronto Super-8 Film Festival April 14 to 16 (final date for shipment of films is March 15). There'll be plenty of screenings, plus workshops on such topics as: Super-8 by the Blind, Feature Production, Polaroid Super-8, Animation and Festivals. More info from Sheila Hill, Imagine 8, Box 7109, Postal Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X8 (416-367-0590).

Videodisks

Osaka's Matsushita Electric has announced development of a home videodisk player that is different from the systems previously announced by RCA and Phillips-MCA, using something called a "twist stylus" and expected to retail (in Japan) for $480-$600. (Meanwhile, MCA has announced that it will offer first-run features—at about $15 for the two disks needed for a 2-hour film—for playing on the $500 videodisk units *it* expects to start selling next fall.)

Tape

The prices are starting to come down: Matsushita has reduced to $795 its videotape-cassette recorder; and Zenith has cut the suggested retail price of its Sony-made VCR from $1300 to $995.

And Reel Images (456 Monroe Turnpike, Monroe, CN 06468; 203-261-5022) has just announced the availability of 50 new features on either the Beta or VHS formats, including *The Grapes of Wrath, M*A*S*H The French Connection,* and *The Paper Chase*. Prices are $49.95 for features up to 125 minutes long, and $69.95 for the longer ones.

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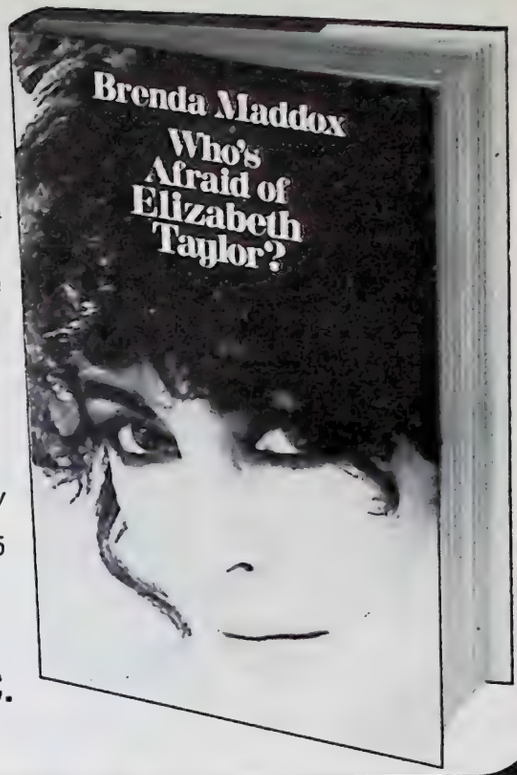

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INFO

BOOKER'S GUIDE TO SOURCES OF 16MM FILMS MENTIONED IN THIS ISSUE

In general, if a feature is mentioned in this issue of *Take One*, and distributed in either the US or Canada in 16mm, the name and address of those distributors are given below. Where we have been unable to find the name of such a distributor, the name of the producer or original overseas distributor is provided in brackets. *Take One* remains happy to assist our readers in contacting a film's producers with a view to exhibiting any feature mentioned in the magazine.

Across the Bridge. CAN:-AST.
All Quiet on the Western Front. UNI.
Apu Trilogy. US:MAB. CAN:CFI.
Ashes and Diamonds. JAN.
The Assassination of Trotsky. CAN:IFD.
Autobiography of a Princess. CAN:NCE.
The Birds. UNI.
Blow Up. US:FI. CAN:BEL.
The Bride Wore Black. UA.
Broadway Melody. US:FI.
The Candidate. WB.
Champion. US:MAB. CAN:-PRS.
Chato's Land. UA.
The Cincinnati Kid. US:FI. CAN:BEL.
Citizen Kane. US:FI. CAN:-AST.
Close Encounters of the Third Kind. SWK*
Coup pour coup. CAN:FAR.
Cries and Whispers. US:-NWP. CAN:IFD.
Dangerous Moonlight. CAN:AST.
Deadfall. US:FI. CAN:BEL.
Dead of Night. US:JAN. CAN:AMB.
Dr. Zhivago. US:FI. CAN:-BEL.
Downhill Racer. US:FI. CAN:PAR.
Duel. CAN:UNI.
Earthquake. UNI.
Eve and the Handyman. (RM Films, Hollywood.)
The Exorcist. WB.
Fort Apache. US:MAB. CAN:AST.
The 400 Blows. US:JAN. CAN:NCE.
The French Connection. US:FI. CAN:BEL.
Henry V. US:TWY. CAN:-AST.
L'Homme qui ment. US:-GRP. CAN:PRF.
Humain, trop humain. CAN:FAR.
Jaws. UNI.
The Jazz Singer. UA.
Les Jeux Interdits. CAN:-FEM.
Le Jour se leve. US:JAN. CAN:FAR.
Jules and Jim. US:JAN. CAN:NCE.
King Rat. US:TWY. CAN:-AST.
Looking for Mr. Goodbar. US:FI* CAN:PAR*
A Man and a Woman. US:HCW. CAN:IFD.
A Man for all Seasons. CAN:AST.
The Man Who Loved Women. US:C5* CAN:NCE*
Miracle in Milan. US:JAN. CAN:PRS.
Mr. Klein. (Basil Film, Paris.)
Panic in Needle Park. US:FI. CAN:BEL.
Pather Panchali. US:MAB. CAN:CFI.
Persona. UA.
Roseland. (Merchant-Ivory Prods., NYC.)
The Round-Up. MAB.
Seance on a Wet Afternoon. US:MAB. CAN:AST.
The Servant. US:JAN. CAN:-AST.
The Seven Samurai. US:-MAB. CAN:AST.
Shakespearewallah. CAN:-NCE.
Shoot the Piano Player. US:JAN. CAN:NCE.
Short Eyes. (Film League, NYC.)
Silence. US:JAN. CAN:NCE.
Small Change. US:NWP. CAN:IFD.
The Soft Skin. JAN.
Stagecoach. US:FI. CAN:-AST.
La Strada. JAN.
Strangers on a Train. WB.
Such a Gorgeous Kid Like Me. CAN:AST.
Sugarland Express. UNI.
The Third Man. TWY.
Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines. US:FI. CAN:BEL.
Tout va bien. NCE.
Two English Girls. CAN:-PRF.
The Whisperers. UA.
The Wild Child. UA.

* A 16mm print may not be currently available.

While based on sources we believe reliable and up-to-date, *Take One* cannot guarantee the accuracy of any of the above information, nor assume any liability for damages caused by any mis-information given. We are happy to print additions and corrections in future issues.

AMB. Ambassador Films, 88 Eglinton Ave. E., Toronto M4P 1B8.
AST. Astral Films, 720 King West, Toronto M5V 2T3.
BEL. BelleVue Distributors, 227 Victoria St., Toronto M5B 1B6.
C5. Cinema Five, 595 Madison Avenue, NYC 10022.
CFI. Canadian Film Institute, 1762 Carling Ave., Ottawa K24 2H7.
FAR. Faroun Films, 136 St. Paul E., Montreal H2Y 1G6.
FEM. Film Library, Embassy of France, 464 Wilbrod St., Ottawa K1N 6M8.
FI. Films Inc., 1144 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091 (and regional offices.)
GRP. Grove Press Films, 196 West Houston, NYC 10014.
HCW. Hurlock Ciné World, 13 Arcadia Rd., Old Greenwich, CN 06870.
IFD. International Film Distributors, 175 Bloor East, Toronto M4W 1E2.
JAN. Janus Films, 745 Fifth Ave., NYC 10022.
MAB. MacMillan Audio Brandon, 34 MacQuesten Parkway S., Mt. Vernon, NY 10550.
NCE. New Cinema Enterprises, 35 Britain St., Toronto M5A 1R7.
NWP. New World Pictures, 8831 Sunset Blvd., LA 90069.
PAR. Paramount Pictures, Toronto Star Bldg., 1 Yonge St., Toronto M5E 1E9.
PRF. Prima Films, 1594 St. Joseph E., Montreal H2J 1M7.
PRS. Peerless Films Ltd., 1070 Bleury, Montreal H2Z 1N3.
SWK. Swank Motion Pictures, 300 S. Jefferson, St. Louis, MO 63166.
TWY. Twyman Films, 329 Salem Avenue, Dayton, OH 45401.
UA. United Artists Corp., Suite 800, 2180 Yonge St., Toronto M4S 2B9, and 729 Seventh Ave., NYC 10019.
UNI. Universal Films, 2450 Victoria Park Ave., Willowdale, Ontario M2J 4A1, and 445 Park Ave., NYC 10022.
WB. Warner Bros. Distributors, 70 Carlton St., Toronto M5B 1L7, and 400 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91505.

RENTAL NEWS

Silo Cinema Inc. (P.O. Box 315, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417; 201-891-8240) has **Last Stand Farmer** for sale as well as rental, in 16mm. It's a documentary record of the life and philosophy of an elderly farmer and his struggle to keep his 19th century farm operation going.

October Films (P.O. Box 5690, Chicago, IL 60680; 312-427 2210) has two new features from China: **Island Militia Women** (120 mins.) and **Battle Song of Taching** (90 mins.).

Puerto Rico: Paradise Invaded (30 mins.) sheds some light on the exploitation of the island as the last American colony. The film may be rented from Latin American Film Project, P.O. Box 315, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417; 201-891-8240).

CONFERENCES & COMPETITIONS

Entries are now being accepted for the 20th annual **American Film Festival,** to be held at the New York Hilton May 21-26. There are over 50 categories for 16mm films released in 1976 and 1977, with a special competition for sponsored films. For entry forms and additional information: American Film Festival, 43 West 61st St., NYC 10023 (212-246-4533).

Preliminary preparations are currently underway for the **U.S. Conference for an Alternative Cinema,** to bring together, from all over the U.S., people involved in the production, distribution and exhibition of social and political films. A prospectus and tentative schedule may be obtained from *Cinéaste* magazine, 333 Sixth Avenue, NYC 10014.

March 25 is the deadline for films entered in this year's **Movies on a Shoestring** competition (there's a $4.50 entry fee). Films in regular 8, Super-8 and 16mm, from anywhere in the world, are eligible. Movies on a Shoestring, P.O. Box 3360, Rochester, NY 14614.

INFO

The 8th annual **Ann Arbor 8mm Film Festival** (with prize money exceeding $1000) takes place Feb. 17-19, but we've only just received notification and you'll have to hurry since the entry deadline is January 24. Entry forms from: Gerry Fialka, Ann Arbor 8mm Film Festival, P.O. Box 7592, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48107 (313-995-3779 or 769-7787).

The Italian Alpine Club and the Trento Town Council announce the 26th International **Festival of Mountain and Exploration Films** (in 16mm and 35mm), with top prizes of 500,000 lire. March 20 is the entry deadline. Write the festival at Via Verdi 30, 38100 Trento, Italy.

The eighth annual **Film Festival on the Exceptional Individual** takes place on March 10. 500 persons are expected to attend screenings of films and videotapes portraying handicapped children and adults, and there are awards. If you have a film or tape you want to submit, contact Neil Goldstein, University Affiliated Program, Childrens' Hospital of Los Angeles, Box 54700 Terminal Annex, Los Angeles 90054.

Nissan USA, distributors of Datsun autos, are sponsoring **Focus '78**—a competition to encourage and reward college-level filmmakers and critics-to-be. There are scholarships, cars and equipment to be won in either the Filmmaking (films entered may be animation, experimental, documentary or narrative) or the Film Study (entries may be reviews, critiques, essays) categories. All submissions must be non-commercial work by a student enrolled in a US college, university, art institute or professional film school. Among the judges are Stan Vanderbeek, Molly Haskell and Andrew Sarris. Further information: Focus, 530 Fifth Avenue, NY 10036.

Purdue University's third annual **Conference on Film** (Mar. 16-18) is presently calling for papers to be delivered at a variety of panels. There will also be workshops and screenings. Complete details are available from Ben Lawton, Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907.

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AMBITIOUS FILMMAKERS: Amazing new report describes how one-man operation has grossed $150,000 a year producing sponsored films. FREE LETTER with complete details. D.H. Vowell, P.O. Box 4891, North Hollywood, CA 91607.

MEMOIRS OF A MOVIEGOER by Henry Random. City moviegoing during the Thirties. $3.50 at Gotham Book Mart, 41 West 47th Street, NYC 10017, or C. O'Grady, 730 East 236th St., No. 5B, NYC 10466.

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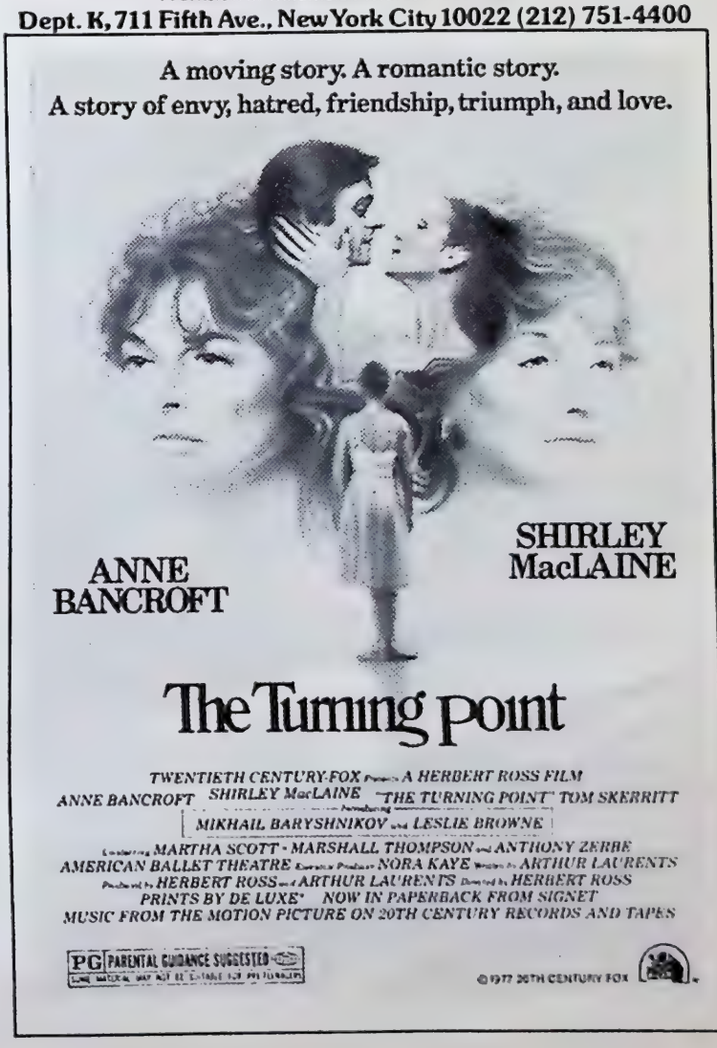
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VOLUME 1

No. 1 (published Sept. 1966): An interview with Alfred Hitchcock; a review of "Torn Curtain", reviews from the Seventh Montreal International Film Festival. **Sold out.**

No. 2 (published Sept. 1966): An interview with Marshall McLuhan on cinema; Paul Krassner on "How Soft Was My Pornography"; interviews with Quebec filmmakers Arthur Lamothe and Jean-Claude Labrecque; a review of "The Wild Angels". **Sold out.**

No. 3 (Jan. 1967): An interview with Jean-Luc Godard; reviews of "A Fistful of Dollars", "Love of A Blonde", and "Fahrenheit 451". **Sold out.**

☐ **No. 4 (April 1967):** An interview with Canadian filmmaker Larry Kent; an article comparing viewers' reactions to the same news event as reported on b&w and color TV; reviews of "Blow-Up", "The Connection", and "Chelsea Girls". **$5.00**

No. 5 (June 1967): A series of articles on the Hollywood Blacklist (including personal reminiscences by Millard Lampell and Herbert Biberman); reviews of the films of Expo 67 and of "Accident", "Cul-de-sac", and "Au Hasard Balthazar". **Sold out.**

No. 6 (Aug. 1967): An interview with Canadian filmmaker Don Owen; the much-reprinted and oft-referred-to "Intersex" article by Robert Russel; an interview with Kenneth Anger; Arthur Penn on "Bonnie and Clyde". **Sold out.**

☐ **No. 7 (Oct. 1967):** An interview with Jean Renoir, an article on Quebec filmmaker Jean-Pierre Lefebvre; reviews of "Warrendale", "Portrait of Jason", "Privilege" and "The Trip". **$5.00**

☐ **No. 8 (Dec. 1967):** An article on Richard Lester and "How I Won the War"; a report (by Joyce Wieland) on "North America's Second All-Women Film Crew"; reviews of "The Fearless Vampire Killers", "Persona", and "Ernie Game". **$5.00**

☐ **No. 9 (April 1968):** An article on Silvio Narizzano; William K. Everson on Laurel and Hardy; reviews of "The President's Analyst", "In Cold Blood", "The Battle of Algiers", and "Elvira Madigan". **$5.00**

No. 10 (June 1968): Alfred Hitchcock talking about some of the special effects used in "The Birds"; a report on Godard's visit to Hollywood (discussions with Sam Fuller, King Vidor, Roger Corman, and Peter Bogdanovich) **Sold out.**

☐ **No. 11 (Sept. 1968):** Analyses of film violence by Fredric Wertham and Paul Krassner; a selection from the letters of Groucho Marx; an interview with the creator of the special effects for "2001"; reviews of "Weekend", "The Green Berets", and "The Bride Wore Black". **$5.00**

No. 12 (Nov. 1968): A survey of the Cuban cinema (biographies and filmographies of four major directors): some comment by Roger Corman; Mordecai Richler on writing for the movies; and a review of "Bullitt". **Sold out.**

VOLUME 2

No. 1 (published March 1969): Interviews with everyone involved in "Alice's Restaurant" (including Penn, Arlo, and Alice); an interview with Ingmar Bergman; a review of Godard's "One Plus One". **Sold out.**

☐ **No. 2 (July 1969):** Interviews with Frank Zappa, Fritz Lang, and Alfred Hitchcock (the latter talking about "Rear Window"); reviews of "If", "In the Year of the Pig", "Teorema", "Salesman". **$5.00**

No. 3 (Oct. 1969): Dynamite interviews with Peter Fonda and Sam Peckinpah; Bergman interviews himself (honest); Stan VanDerBeek writes about computer animation. **Sold out.**

☐ **No. 4 (Jan. 1970):** Part One of the edited transcript of the 1947 HUAC hearings into Communist "infiltration" of the movie industry (witnesses include Jack Warner, Ayn Rand, and Ginger Roger's mother). **$5.00**

☐ **No. 5 (May 1970):** Part Two of the HUAC hearings (with Dalton Trumbo, Alvah Bessie, Dore Schary, and Berthold Brecht); an article on Roman Polanski. **$5.00**

☐ **No. 6 (July 1970):** An interview with Jacques Tati; Joe Kane's article on B films about the Bomb; Costa-Gavras talks about "Z"; Wexler's Associate Producer on "Medium Cool" spills all the beans; a Hollywood bibliography; reviews of "Red", "Goin' Down the Road", and "Hospital". **$2.00**

☐ **No. 7 (Sept. 1970):** Interviews with the people involved with "American Revolution II"; an article by Mordecai Richler; a speech by FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson; reviews of "Joe" and "The Confession". **$5.00**

☐ **No. 8 (Nov. 1970):** Gene Phillips on homosexuality in the movies; Josef Skorecky on the Czech New Wave; Mike Goodwin on Richard Rush. **$2.00**

☐ **No. 9 (Dec. 1970):** Interviews with Tex Avery and John Grierson; reviews of "Ryan's Daughter", "Trash", and "City Girl". **$1.50**

☐ **No. 10 (March 1971):** Our Ultimate Godard Issue: A long interview with Godard and Gorin; reviews of four recent Godard films; an up-to-date filmography. **$2.00**

☐ **No. 11 (June 1971):** More Godard: photos from a notebook; a complete bibliography; reviews of three more films. Also: nice pictures of Geneviève Bujold; a short story; and reviews of "La Hora de Los Hornos", "Maidstone", "Claire's Knee", and "El Topo". **$2.00**

☐ **No. 12 (Oct. 1971):** Roger Corman is interviewed and Laszlo Kovacs is written about; reviews of "Sunday Bloody Sunday", the Cannes Film Festival, "McCabe & Mrs. Miller", and "Drive, He Said". **$2.00**

VOLUME 3

No. 1 (published Dec. 1971): The famous (much reprinted since) Groucho Marx interview. Plus Joe Adamson's article "Duck Soup for the Rest of Your Life"; and some remarks by Stan Brakhage. Also reviews of "Mon Oncle Antoine", "Derby", and "Rip-Off". **Sold out.**

☐ **No. 2 (Feb. 1972):** The now-rare "Women in Film" issue. Women (including Eleanor Perry, Anita Loos, Sylvia Spring, Tanya Ballantyne MacKay, and Stephanie Rothman) on Women in Film; filmographies; interviews with Shirley Clarke and Joyce Wieland; reviews. **$4.00**

☐ **No. 3 (April 1972):** "The Life and Times of Michael Snow"; two articles on Third World films; Naomi Wise on "The Hawksian Woman"; reviews of "Clockwork Orange" and "Last Picture Show". **$4.00**

☐ **No. 4 (June 1972):** Stuart Kaminsky's marathon Donald Siegel interview, introduced by Peter Bogdanovich; Joan Mellen on Kurosawa. Reviews of "The Godfather", "The Last Movie", "Le Boucher", "WR", "What's Up Doc?", "Tout va bien". **$1.00**

☐ **No. 5 (July 1972):** Charlton Heston on Orson Welles; an interview with Haskell Wexler; Leigh Brackett's "Comment on the Hawksian Woman", Reviews of "Hannie Caulder", "Slaughterhouse Five", and "Even Dwarfs Started Small". **$1.00**

☐ **No. 6 (October 1972):** Charlton Heston on Orson Welles; an interview with Haskell Wexler; Leigh Brackett's "Comment on the Hawksian Woman", Reviews of "Hannie Caulder", "Slaughterhouse Five", and "Even Dwarfs Started Small". **$1.00**

☐ **No. 7 (Dec. 1972):** Articles on "The Chelsea Girls", Godzilla, Griffith and Woody Allen. Reviews of "Duck You Sucker!", "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie", "Fat City", and "The King of Marvin Gardens". **$1.00**

☐ **No. 8 (March 1973):** The Take One Howard Hawks Interview; plus articles on Griffith's talkies and Joseph Losey. Reviews of "Discreet Charm" and "Marvin Gardens", plus "Last Tango in Paris." **$4.00**

☐ **No. 9 (May 1973):** Sergio Leone—an article and an interview; plus an interview with Carl Foreman and articles on Terence Fisher and "A Woman of Paris". Reviews of "Pulp", "Ludwig", "August & July", and "High Plains Drifter". **$1.00**

☐ **No. 10 (July 1973):** An all-interview issue: Bruce Dern, Henry Fonda, James Wong Howe, and the makers of "Cannibal Girls". Plus reviews of "The Poseidon Adventure", "The Harder They Come", and "Pat Garrett & Billy the Kid. **$3.50**

☐ **No. 11 (Sept. 1973):** Interview with Ray Bradbury and Tom Laughlin; articles on Allan Dwan and Edward Ludwig. Reviews of "O Lucky Man!", "Westworld", "State of Siege", and "Charley Varrick". **$1.00**

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VOLUME 4

☐ **No. 1 (published Jan. 1974):** Interviews with Eric Rohmer and Mae West; an examination of the National Film Board's Challenge for Change program; and Leigh Brackett on scriptwriting "The Big Sleep" and "The Long Goodbye". **$1.00**

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VOLUME 5

☐ **No. 1 (Feb. 1976):** Misunderstood Doris Day; Jean-Pierre Gorin talks; and so does Henry Hathaway. Gideon Bachmann reviews "Salo". **$2.00**

No. 2 (May 1976): A Friendly Salute to Alfred Hitchcock: Truffaut, Mike Hodges, Brian De Palma, John Russell Taylor, James Stewart, Philippe Halsman, Ingrid Bergman, Cary Grant. A rarity. If you don't have a copy of this issue, you ain't serious about movies. **Sold out.**

☐ **No. 3 (August 1976):** Russ Meyer lets it all hang out; so does Milos Forman; Patrick McGilligan assesses the film career of Ronald (who?) Reagan. **$1.50**

☐ **No. 4 (October 1976):** A wonderful interview with Harlan Ellison; Monaco writes about Jean-Pierre Léaud; reviews of "India Song", "French Provincial" and "Bugs Bunny Superstar". **$1.50**

No. 5: Our first Filmletter. **Sold out.**

No. 6 (Nov. 1976): The Take One Nicholas Ray interview (wit and pathos); reviews of "Carrie", Chulas Fronteras" and "Network". **Sold out.**

No. 7: Our second Filmletter. Also sold out.

☐ **No. 8 (Feb. 1977):** Scott Eyman remembers his friend Fritz Lang; interviews with George Burns and Ellen Burstyn; a list of films on film. **$2.00**

No. 9: Another Filmletter! Sold out too.

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No. 11: Still another Filmletter. You get the idea.

☐ **No. 12 (Nov. 1977):** Jim Monaco looks for Diane Keaton; Jim Christy finds Lash Larue; also Agnès Varda, John Ford and Pauline Kael. David Thomson's unorthodox obituary of Groucho Marx. **$3.00**

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Unless you've been a *Take One* subscriber all through Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, you've missed out on some terrific movie reading.

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Interviews with people like Alfred Hitchcock, Marshall McLuhan, Arthur Penn, Jean Renoir, Frank Zappa, Jean-Luc Godard, Fritz Lang, Peter Fonda, Sam Peckinpah, Ingmar Bergman, Jacques Tati, Costa-Gavras, Tex Avery, John Grierson, Roger Corman, Groucho Marx, Joyce Wieland, Donald Siegel, Charlton Heston, Howard Hawks, Bruce Dern, Henry Fonda, James Wong Howe, Ray Bradbury, Tom Laughlin, Steven Spielberg, Donald Westlake, Monte Hellman, François Truffaut, Eric Rohmer, Mae West, and Salvador Allende.

Many of the articles, interviews, columns and reviews that were first published in the pages of *Take One* have gone on to be re-printed in books and magazines around the world, but the easiest way to find the cream of film writing has always been right here—in our pages.

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PUNDIT'S PAGE

A HANDY-DANDY GUIDE TO SOME OF THIS SEASON'S MAJOR FILMS, IN THE FORM OF CRITICAL NUGGETS GLEANED FROM THE WRITINGS OF AMERICA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL MOVIE CRITICS

By Susan Schenker

Semi-Tough

Directed by Michael Ritchie. Screenplay by Walter Bernstein based on the novel by Dan Jenkins. With Burt Reynolds, Kris Kristofferson, Jill Clayburgh, Robert Preston, Lotte Lenya.

"David Merrick's production for United Artists will open strongly on its surface elements, though legs could then become wobbly in areas where the film's eventual story direction will be perceived as obscure."

Murf., VARIETY

"The picture is, above, all, a principled comedy, speaking lightly but honestly about life as it is—and what it might be—in our times..."

Richard Schickel, TIME MAGAZINE

"It doesn't get under your skin or start to diverge and ramify in unexpected ways like *The Bad News Bears* and *Smile* and even the exceedingly streamlined, underwritten *Downhill Racer.*"

Gary Arnold, THE WASHINGTON POST

"Sensitivity training; genteel editor-scouts who, as the pimps of the publishing world, match up real-life pros and kinky subjects—these and various P.R. shills are some of the targets of the uneven but often side-splitting jokes that Ritchie and screenwriter Bernstein have devised."

Molly Haskell, NEW YORK MAGAZINE

The Turning Point

Directed by Herb Ross. Screenplay by Arthur Laurents. With Anne Bancroft, Shirley MacLaine, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Leslie Browne.

"*The Turning Point* is one of the best films of this era. It's that rare example of synergy in which every key element is excellent and the ensemble is an absolute triumph..."

Murf., VARIETY

"Will anybody long for more Anne Bancroft-Shirley MacLaine movies? It's doubtful... Even in the way it's made, this movie is like TV—it's the Partridge Family in Ballet Land."

Pauline Kael, NEW YORKER

"The vision of *The Turning Point* is a healing vision: it has the luminous humanity and the wisdom found in Renoir's best films... at a time when special effects marathons are getting all the publicity, this intimate human drama is the movie of the year."

Stephen Farber, NEW WEST MAGAZINE

Close Encounters of the Third Kind

Directed by Steven Spielberg. Screenplay by Spielberg. With Richard Dreyfuss, François Truffaut, Teri Garr, Melinda Dillon, Bob Balaban.

"There's no big positive rush here, instead a high-tension, nervous, uneasy, often heartless environment in which Dreyfuss and Dillon, supposedly being the audience's reps in the story, are helpless flotsam."

Murf., VARIETY

"Rather than converted, the skeptic may well find himself put off by the film's doctrinal content—not to mention by a plot whose causes and effects frequently elude human reason."

Joy Gould Boyum, WALL STREET JOURNAL

"*Close Encounters of the Third Kind* is the best—the most elaborate—1950s science fiction movie ever made, a work that borrows its narrative shape and its concerns from those earlier films, but enhances them with what looks like the latest developments in movie and space technology."

Vincent Canby, NEW YORK TIMES

Looking for Mr. Goodbar

Directed by Richard Brooks. Screenplay by Brooks based on the novel by Judith Rossner. With Diane Keaton, William Atherton, Richard Gere, Tuesday Weld.

"[Keaton is] too good to waste on the sort of material the movie provides, which is artificial without in any way qualifying as a miracle fabric."

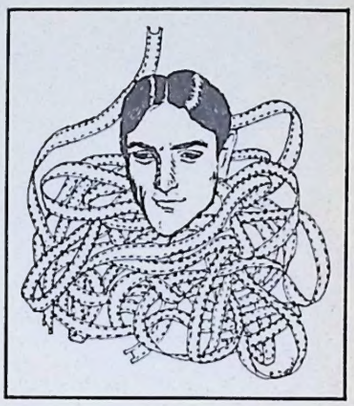
Vincent Canby, NEW YORK TIMES

"Excellent film of downbeat story. Diane Keaton in topflight performance. Young urban market is the target."

Murf., VARIETY

"The weakness of this thriller is its moralizing psychology... It's as if a woman wouldn't want sex unsanctified by tenderness unless she was crippled, psychologically flawed, self-hating... [this is] a windy jeremiad laid on top of fractured film syntax."

Pauline Kael, NEW YORKER



1900

Directed by Bernardo Bertolucci. Screenplay by Bertolucci, Franco Aracalli and Giuseppe Bertolucci. With Robert De Niro, Gérard Depardieu, Dominique Sanda, Burt Lancaster, Sterling Hayden, Donald Sutherland, Stefania Sandrelli.

"One suspects that as grandly conceived as *1900* was, it has always lacked a guiding vision of real vitality and strength. It's a shapeless mass of film stock containing some brilliant moments and a lot more that are singularly uninspired."

Vincent Canby, NEW YORK TIMES

"The film is appalling, yet it has the grandeur of a classic visionary folly. Next to it, all the other new movies are like something you hold up at the end of a toothpick."

Pauline Kael, NEW YORKER

"Whatever feeling there is in Bertolucci's pageant is not for the land and its farmers but for De Niro and Depardieu in what is the kinkiest bit of star cinema masquerading as political parable since Lina Wertmüller."

Molly Haskell, NEW YORK MAGAZINE

Susan Schenker is a New York writer and freelance story analyst for major motion picture companies.

"EPIC OF THE CENTURY!
A GREAT FILM! A HUGE WORK!
EVERYONE WHO CARES ABOUT MOVIES WILL HAVE TO SEE BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI'S '1900'!" –Jack Kroll, Newsweek

"THERE ARE SEQUENCES IN '1900' AS GREAT AS ANY EVER FILMED." –Pauline Kael, The New Yorker

"ENORMOUS FILM! '1900' POSSESSES MORE BRUTE FORCE THAN ANY OTHER FILM SINCE 'THE GODFATHER II'." –Frank Rich, Time Magazine

1900

A FILM BY BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI

© 1977 Paramount Pictures Corporation

ALBERTO GRIMALDI PRESENTS A FILM BY BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI "1900"
ROBERT DE NIRO GERARD DEPARDIEU DOMINIQUE SANDA
AND IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER: FRANCESCA BERTINI LAURA BETTI WERNER BRUHNS
STEFANIA CASINI STERLING HAYDEN ANNA HENKEL ELLEN SCHWIERS ALIDA VALLI
ROMOLO VALLI AND WITH STEFANIA SANDRELLI AND WITH DONALD SUTHERLAND
AND WITH BURT LANCASTER
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY VITTORIO STORARO (A.I.C.)
MUSIC BY ENNIO MORRICONE TECHNICOLOR® SCREENPLAY BY FRANCO ARCALLI
GIUSEPPE BERTOLUCCI BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI PRODUCED BY ALBERTO GRIMALDI
DIRECTED BY BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI
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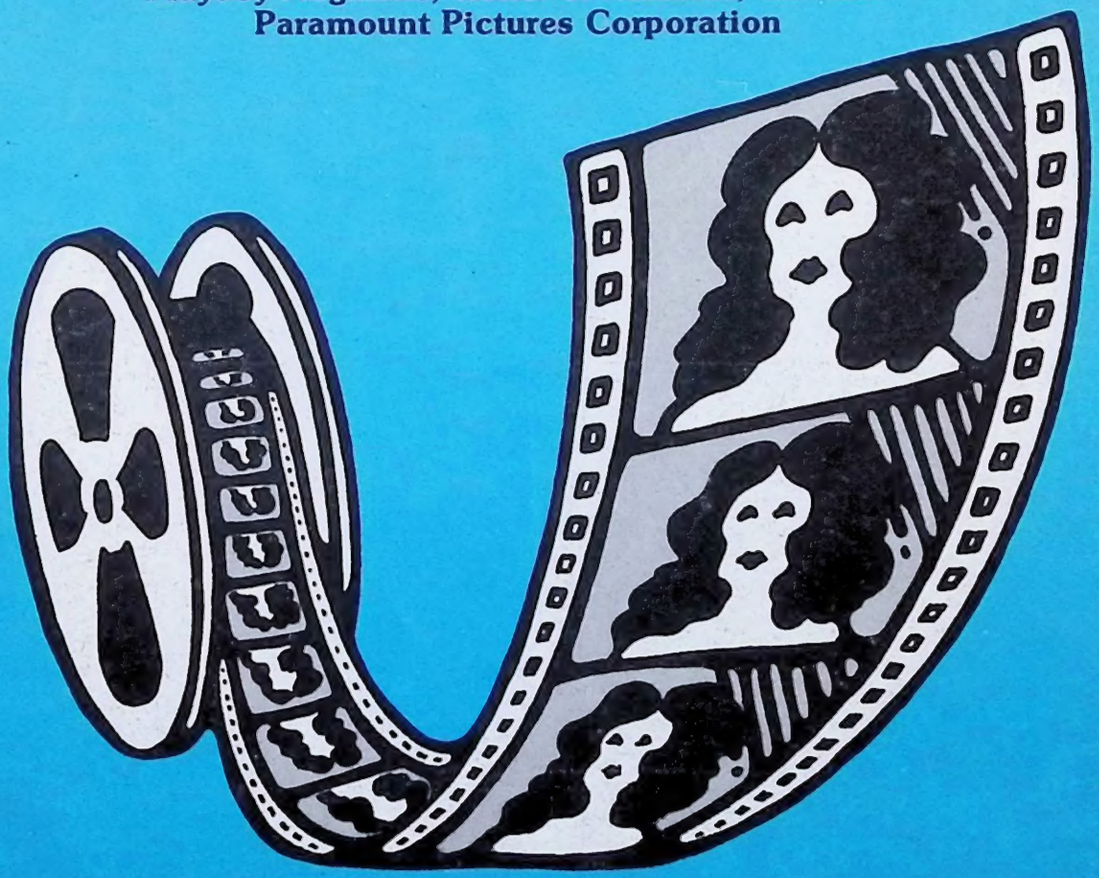

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